

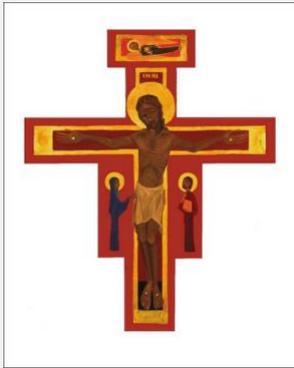
Issue 2:
March 2026

A candle in....



THE WINDOW

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



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A PRAYER FOR IRAN
BY THE RT REVD DR GULI FRANCIS-DEHQANI,
BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD

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 good will 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. Amen.

Bishop Guli came to the UK as a refugee from Iran in 1980 after her brother was murdered during the revolution in which the current regime came to power. She spoke recently in the House of Lords from her own deep personal experience.

Inside:

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Preparing for Holy Week and Easter - that is what Lent is really all about.

Richard Pyke

I am a member of small planning group that meet regularly to plan for the next Taizé prayer service at St Helens. It is a great privilege to be working with Rosalind, Rob and Dominic where we spend a couple of hours thinking through choosing a theme, a short Bible reading, a psalm and the Taizé songs to include in this act of worship.

At our recent meeting, which involved the planning of both the March and April services, we began as usual with searching for both the theme and reading. Sometimes the lectionary readings for that particular Sunday fit but often, as we deliberate, we sense the need for the service to give expression to the seasonal emphasis of the Church's year and as in this recent case, Lent and Easter.

The opportunity to plan accordingly, led to my reminiscing about my years as a parish priest as I grew to have a deeper understanding of the shaping of the Lent and Easter cycle and its special services. Not only did it influence my faith, it also reinforced my conviction, then and now, that Lent is intended as period of preparation for the yearly celebration of Passiontide, Holy Week and Easter. I realise that might be stating the obvious, but back then, it was my intention to encourage a healthy balanced attitude and approach to the season, to encourage those committed to my care, and not to lose sight of that overall purpose.

For many, life can be difficult enough without loading more burdens. For others, having given something up say chocolates, thus seeming to tick the box, to question whether that is really what Lent is all about? The real purpose of Lent has always been about using this special time as an opportunity to deepen faith and trust in God through our Lord Jesus. To desire to be more like him, and to work for his kingdom. To do so is to allow ourselves to come closer by a deeper understanding of his passion and in heart and mind as it were, to go walking with him through remembrance of the events of that first Holy Week.

Lent coincides in the northern hemisphere with spring and with the light lengthening of days, hence the origin of the word Lent (Old English word *lencten*, meaning "spring" or "springtime"). It is not a static time but it has a momentum, building up to Holy Week. I believe we need to keep that in view and why our planning group pray that the focus of all our Parish worship will add to this sense of momentum, solemn in part yes, but not neglecting the joy and hindsight of faith, for this is indeed the time and opportunity of spiritual growth, not negative but positive!

I have been fortunate in my life time to see the benefits of a renewed interest in the observation of Holy Week. This has been enabled in part, I am sure, by the revised liturgy of services and prayers of the Church of England that I believe has enriched the provision of our Book of Common Prayer, complementing it by adding much needed supplement.

I've seen folk benefit by making Holy Week a high priority. There really is something gained by putting in time to attend all the services as advertised in our Churches from Palm Sunday and then especially observing the three days from Maundy Thursday through Good Friday, Holy Saturday and into the joy of Easter day. I appreciated then as now that not everybody can physically manage such attendance and yet all can still be mindful of that time by keeping in step in private devotion.

What is important is to use the opportunity of living through these events prayerfully, day by day and hour by hour for I believe that to do so, can and will have had a transformative effect on our faith and likewise be blessing and a benefit to our Church communities.

This identity with our Lord in Holy Week comes to a climax at Easter Eve and Day as indeed it has always done by faithful Christians, in a recommitment of the vows made at our baptism and

confirmation. Lent really has been about preparing for this moment, to go on sharing the joy of the resurrection life.

Finally, having committed ourselves afresh, the joyful festival should really be celebrated not only on Easter day but the great forty days following. Included in the joyful Eastertide to come, will be a Taizé prayer in St Helens on Low Sunday evening!

A time indeed to “celebrate the Feast”!

Inside the Liturgy: Action and Meaning

The Revd Dr A K M Adam

For the first four Sundays in Lent, I'll be inviting interested parties lingering after the 10:30 service at St Helen's to have a peek inside the understanding of what happens in the liturgy of the Eucharist (and other liturgies, but particularly the Eucharist). Of course, this will reflect my own thinking on the topic; other celebrants' perspectives will, of course, vary.

In order to peer into the practitioner's view of the liturgy, we should first specify to what we refer when we use the term 'liturgy' itself. I began last week by identifying liturgy as the practice of *reverential communicative action*. By 'action' I mean 'everything we do', including gestures, walking about, talking, and so on. 'Communicative' gets a bit trickier; it involves both 'what we *think* we're doing' and 'what others *think* (or even 'have reason to think') we're doing' - that is, we don't control the meaning of our actions by our awareness or intentions, but we *offer* (as it were) words and action for which we trust others will recognise at least roughly what we're about. Both 'action' and 'communicative' apply to all we do and say in church and at home, in town, or wherever; so I specify *reverential communicative action* to focus on the ways we behave in the presence of holiness. This doesn't require that one actually determinedly *believe* that some spots in the church, some silverware or loaves or people actually are holy in and of themselves - but by common consent we behave *as if* they represent holiness so as to orient our lives toward the presence of holiness, of sanctity, in our lives.

That's a big chewy mouthful of verbiage! Let me suggest a way it applies. At St Helen's, we typically begin our weekly Eucharist with a *procession*. Now, there's no need to have a *procession*; in plenty of places, services just begin with people in place, and there's nothing wrong with that. A procession, though, plays a reverential communicative role by recollecting the experience of our forebears in faith who moved *toward* a (divine) goal: Abram and Sarai uprooting their household and relocating to a faraway country; Moses leading the tribes of Jacob from captivity to a Promised Land; the yearly pilgrimages of the people of God to worship in Jerusalem; the return of exiled Judaites from Babylon to the ruins of Jerusalem; Jesus's own journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, and (within that city) the Way of the Cross; the innumerable pilgrimages that devout souls have made to spiritually important sites. Moreover, the procession signifies reverence for the holiness of the altar area, as the choir turns aside to their own stalls, and the clergy and servers approach the platform reverently, bowing as they enter. The priest who presides may kiss the altar as a sign of love for the Lord who will be present there.

In future weeks, I'll talk more (in snack-size bits) about the altar, about ritual actions, about the interaction of servers and clergy when conducting the Liturgy of the Sacrament, and so on. But this is a taster of the topic, which can aptly be summed up by the words of the Psalmist: 'Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Let the whole earth stand in awe of him.'

Faith Forum: How Music Works in Worship

Rev'd Dr Phil Cooke summarised by Rob Rutherford

A good number of people gathered in the Parish Centre or joined on-line to hear what Phil had to say. He was keen to hear what we thought as well, so it developed into an interesting discussion. Music is a gift from God and it is important we use it well.

Phil started with some questions for us:

What is music doing in Church worship? Where? How? Why?
What effect does it have on us and on our encounter with God?

Various suggestions were made and Phil added some of his own:

Music is a vehicle for worship and it can help us to praise and to pray. It helps us to hear God and, in a sense, 'unlocks heaven'. It helps us to build our faith and because we remember and internalise hymns, canticles and sung responses, we learn, remember and recall. The point was also made that music can allow us to participate in the worship even when we are dealing with personal tragedy or uncertainty. Hymns are often based on scripture. John Bell (of the Iona Community and a regular on 'Thought for the Day') claims that more theology is learned through hymns than through sermons. The theology in hymns therefore needs to be 'good theology'. We didn't unpack that! Music helps to build community and it can express our identity and culture. Think of negro spirituals for example. Music can communicate to others what we believe (Phil called this 'missiological'. I guess when we sing in the town square, we are doing this). Someone mentioned that hymns connect us to previous generations.

Phil then described some of the history and theology of music used in liturgy. A 4th Century theologian, Basil the Great, thought that music helped the listener absorb theology. A spoonful of sugar... was the analogy. During the Reformation, Luther (1538) was supportive of music: "A person who .. does not regard music as a marvellous creation of God must be a clodhopper indeed and does not deserve to be called a human being". Calvin (1509-1564), however was deeply suspicious of music, particularly of singing. In England, The Book of Common Prayer, for example, does not indicate spaces for hymns and Cromwell (c.1485–1540) banned music in Church (though as Peter Foster reminded us, he wasn't anti-music as such).

If music is a gift from God and given back to God in worship than it should be the best we can offer. This is true whatever the style. Phil gave the impression that many styles could work if done with integrity and not done to glorify us but to glorify God, not simply stirring emotions. I was left with the impression that 'new' is not necessarily 'bad' and 'old' is not necessarily 'good'. Views welcome! The discussion is meant to go on!

Phil left us with this: "Some words they can't be spoken, only sung" – a quote from a Gary Barlow, Andrew Lloyd-Webber song. Make of that what you will!



Image from [here](#): under a public domain licence

Thoughts about flowers from General Synod

Helen King

Helen lives in Wallingford and is one of Oxford's Lay Representatives on General Synod

The business of Synod this time around covered many areas that affect us all: some progress towards independent safeguarding; the care system; mental health (with more support recommended for clergy on how best to support those with mental health needs); poverty (40 years on from the *Faith in the City* report); fees for burials (Synod rejecting attempts to raise these very significantly); funding the communities with the lowest incomes; an update on plans to encourage working class people into ministry. And, of course, Living in Love and Faith (LLF). On that, as I said when speaking to my amendment, 'The problem that it is too much of an end for some, and not enough of an end for others'. As I said in my speech, 'a little less conversation and a little more action' is needed.

I'm now going to reflect on just one item, and it's not one which was at the top of my list of debates when I arrived at Synod. This item was the Worcester Diocesan Synod motion on sustainable church flowers. Ahead of Synod there had been many 'No, really??' comments around the decision to schedule this debate. How could church flowers merit an hour of discussion? As anticipated, a speech was made in the debate on the agenda criticising that decision: I joined in the applause for that speech. Why talk about flowers when Gaza is not on the agenda until July? What does that say about our priorities? And yet, by the end of the week, I was a convert.

The motion in question was based on the [Sustainable Church Flowers](#) movement, and originated in St Bartholomew's, Harpley, a parish in Worcestershire. The movement has many dimensions. It's about the environment; avoiding damaging pesticides and unnecessary plastic, and the release of microplastics into the seas. It's about the planet; the use of water in drought-affected countries to grow flowers for export. It's about working conditions; who grows these flowers and how are they treated? But it's also about beauty and life and fragility. Floral foam is the enemy: chicken wire is one of many environmentally-friendly ways of keeping flowers in place.

In the debate, so many good reasons were offered for this motion being on our agenda. Yes, it could have been a memo to parishes asking them to think about using seasonal flowers and sustainable methods of display. But by coming up from one parish, through deanery and diocesan synod to General Synod, the sustainable church flowers motion demonstrated precisely the way that we can amplify the voices of our parishes; their concerns and their experiences. It celebrated the work of the largely invisible people who, week by week, decorate our church buildings; many of them women, many of them in the older age groups. By asking how we arranged flowers before floral foam, it also recovers lost knowledge and honours older people who can share this knowledge afresh. And, as was pointed out in the debate, we can be angered by silence on Gaza *as well as* angered by the damage we are doing to the environment. They are not mutually exclusive. There was a procedural motion to move to next business during the debate, but it was defeated. I wasn't the only convert in the room! More than once in the debate people quoted Jesus' words, 'Consider the lilies of the field'. I was interested to see that the Sustainable Church Flowers site has an excellent analysis of the [origin of lilies as an Easter flower](#), showing how forced flowers out of season have huge costs for the environment. There's something there about tradition, and how it needs to be challenged in the light of new information.

I even stood to speak. I wasn't called; it probably didn't help that I had not put in a request to do so ahead of the debate. I wanted to share a further flower-related point from the mantra 'reduce-reuse-recycle'. When I married my husband, in another church in our benefice there had been a funeral of a member of the armed forces a couple of days before. His family asked if the flowers from that funeral could be reused in any way, so our vicar called me. I said yes, of course. My friends – mostly from the Baptist church, one of them a professional florist using our wedding to train some other people new to this work – rapidly rethought and wove those funeral flowers into their arrangements. Flowers can move from signs of mortality to signs of celebration. It's just one aspect of flower power.

I was delighted to run into a group of parishioners from St Bartholomew's Harpley after the debate, and to share my new enthusiasm with them.

I've been reflecting on why I was converted to the importance of this motion. It's partly about initial gut reactions versus learning more. Don't get me wrong, I love flowers, to the point where I post pictures on them on Bluesky using the hashtag 'bloomscrolling'. My dahlia photos are particularly widely shared! I'm also a galantophile so this is one of my favourite seasons. But I hadn't thought through the implications of this debate. Once I knew more, I moved towards enthusiasm. In that sense, it's like my instant conversion to supporting the ordination of women to the priesthood, many years ago, when I was a deanery synod secretary taking notes as Mary Tanner addressed us and pointed out that the priest at the altar represents Jesus's humanity, not his maleness.

And I'm just back from church, talking to one of our churchwardens about the flowers in our church, because she'd seen this debate was coming up and had told our wonderful flower arrangers about it; so, from the parish to Synod, and from Synod straight back to the parish. Normal church life has been informed and enhanced.

For me, this debate was Synod at its best.

Helen writes regularly on synod matters and LLF on this blog.

<https://shared-conversations.com/about/>



As part of gaining their A Rocha Eco Award, St Nicolas has adopted an eco-friendly approach to church decoration, using home grown flowers and greenery where possible, augmented preferentially by locally grown and Fairtrade blooms. Oasis is seldom used. These are two of the results.



Church Governance – democracy in action? Get involved!

The church recognises many new years – Liturgical (1st Sunday of Advent), financial (1 January) and the date the new church councils are elected. This date has to fall before the end of May, and is usually determined by the date of Easter.

In a multi-church parish such as ours there are two levels – the three District Church Councils (DCCs) which ‘look after’ the day-to-day running of the three churches, and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) which ‘looks after’ the affairs of the Parish. So at our Annual District Church Meetings (below) we will receive reports on the activities of the individual churches, and on their finances. We will be asked to vote for members of the congregation to sit on the DCC and work, with Wardens and Clergy, to guide the church through the next year. We will also be asked to nominate people to be PCC Representatives and Deanery Synod Representatives (who also sit on DCC). These posts will be elected by the parish as a whole, meeting at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting – where we will also receive reports on the activities and finances of the Parish, and other reports of parish interest. PCC members are Trustees of the Parish, responsible, under Charity Commission rules, for the governance and finances of the Parish as a whole. PCC members act for the Parish, feeding into discussions the views of their home congregation, and feeding back decisions of the PCC.

In addition, congregations are asked, at their ADCM, to nominate two people to be Church Wardens (who are ex officio PCC members) to represent them in the year to come. Church Wardens are elected at the Meeting of Parishioners (literally anyone who lives in the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames), usually held immediately before the APCM.

Churches also nominate members of their congregation to be Deanery Synod representatives, also elected at the APCM. At Deanery Synod, representatives from all the churches in the Deanery come together to share best practice and help each other as best we can in our wider area. Deanery Synod reps are also asked to vote for our representatives on Diocesan Synod, and so feed into the greater governance of the Church (see page 5 for an example of this in action)

Do consider prayerfully who in our congregations might be being called to serve in these ways (might it be you?), and do come along to the ADCMs / APCM to hear what has been happening in the Parish, and to engage in the discussion as to where we might be travelling

Eluned Hallas, Secretary to PCC

Dates:

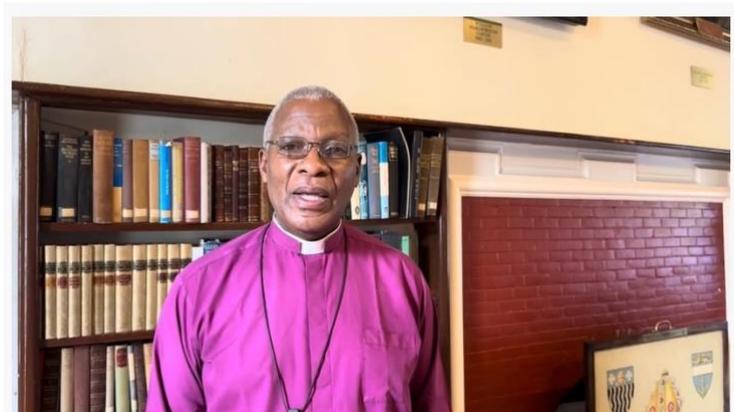
St Nicolas’ ADCM – Thursday 16 April, St Nicolas’ Church, 7:30pm

St Helen’s ADCM – Sunday 19 April, St Helen’s Church, after the 10:30am Service

St Michael’s ADCM – Sunday 26 April, St Michael & All Angels, after the 9:30am Service

AMP / APCM – Thursday 30 April, St Helen’s Church, evening time to be announced

The Most Revd. Dr. Thabo Cecil Makgoba, the Archbishop of Cape Town and Metropolitan of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, was announced as the new chair of UK development and humanitarian agency Christian Aid. Archbishop Thabo has a strong track-record of working on poverty and injustice in South Africa and globally.



Stations of the Cross

With thanks to St Michael's Church

Stations of the Cross can be found in many churches, particularly Catholic or High Anglican, as a series of fourteen images which represent stages of Christ's journey on the day of his crucifixion. The practice of walking the Stations began centuries ago as a pilgrimage around the physical places that Jesus travelled on that momentous day. Pilgrims meditated on the events of Christ's Passion, a spiritual journey that is known as the Via Dolorosa, the way of suffering. However, a trip to Jerusalem was not possible for everyone and in today's political climate is hazardous to say the least. Churches began to use artistic representations of Christ's suffering as a source of spiritual inspiration, a devotion associated with Franciscans.¹ We are fortunate in St Michael's to have an attractive set of Stations which date back to 1945 and which were produced by the Faith Craft workshop². More information and images of all fourteen stations can be found by following the link below to our website³.

The exercise of walking the stations has varied throughout time and location but its purpose is to remember the death and sacrifice of our Lord in a devotional way. And it is not only Catholics and Anglo-Catholics who participate in this way of commemorating our Lord's death and sacrifice, but churches of other denominations find them inspiring and beneficial too. For instance, the Church of England has produced an online resource for personal prayer and liturgical devotion entitled the 'Way of the Cross in Common Worship'⁴. In St Michael's the stations are the focus of a series of meditations and prayers. The sessions are short, lay-led and may use poetry and readings as well as prayer to guide worship. The walks (and you don't have to walk if that's difficult) take place during Lent on Tuesday evenings at 7pm, so do join us on March 10th and 17th. (On Tuesday 23rd at 7.30pm there will be Silent Reflections as an alternative opportunity for meditation.)



Second Station: Jesus is compelled to bear his cross



Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KR5hXcwELVY>

² <https://www.societyofthefaith.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Stations-of-the-Cross-leaflet.pdf>

³ https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StM_stations_background.html

⁴ <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/lent#mmm134>

An Introduction to St Faithful's Havnot

Interpreted by Rob Rutherford

Recently my Facebook feed has given me postings from a fictitious Parish called St Faithful's at a fictional place called Havnot. It might or might not be related to the real parish of St Faith's in the real place called Havant. The fiction is the brainchild of Rev Tom Kennar its Rector. Any resemblance to real people is of course entirely coincidental but they are "composites of people I admire: volunteers who give hours of unpaid time, clergy who carry huge responsibilities, and congregations who quietly keep showing up."

Its purpose is to amuse through gentle parody but thereby to encourage thoughtful engagement.

The cast of characters includes the following:

Rev Sandy Lintel, a curate, generally thought to be long-suffering.

Horace (known as 'Horse') Palmer, the very odd job man for the Parish.

Rev Tim Keen, Vicar

The Hon Peregrine ("Perry") Wainwright, Churchwarden

Mr Alan ("Dobbs") Dobbs, Verger

The following conversation takes place in 'The Little John', their local pub:

But what should I believe?

Horse was staring at his phone like it had just revoked his baptism.

"It says here," he announced, "that unless I believe the correct doctrine of how the cross works, I'm trusting in a false gospel."

Perry paused mid-crisp. "Is salvation a multiple-choice exam now?"

Horse scrolled. "Apparently there's a right mechanism. If you pick the wrong one, eternity is... misfiled. Hell awaits, because you choose the wrong option"

Sandy took a slow sip.

"Tell me," she said, "when the thief was hanging next to Jesus, what theory of the atonement did he subscribe to?"

Horse blinked. "None?"

"Exactly. He just said, 'I'm a sinner' and 'Remember me.'"

"And Jesus didn't reply, 'Before I do, could you clarify your understanding of atonement categories?'"

"Strangely, no."

A small silence.

Horse frowned. "But don't we have to believe the right thing?"

"Depends what you mean by BELIEVE," Sandy said. "The word comes from Old English — to hold dear, to treasure. It's related to 'beloved.' Originally it wasn't about passing a theology exam. It was about entrusting yourself to someone."

Perry looked relieved. “I’m very bad at exams.”

From behind the bar Tim drifted over.

“The New Testament doesn’t give us a single plumbing diagram of how the cross works,” he said. “It gives us images. Victory. Sacrifice. Reconciliation. Liberation. Poetry, not a spreadsheet.”

Horse rubbed his forehead. “But people online are very sure.”

“Yes,” Sandy said gently. “Certainty feels safe. Especially if you’ve been told since childhood that salvation depends on getting the mechanism exactly right.”

Horse looked uneasy.

“It is a bit frightening,” he admitted. “If you start questioning the explanation, it feels like you’re pulling at the thread that holds the whole jumper together.”

“Of course it feels frightening,” Sandy said. “You’re not wrong to feel that. But sometimes what’s fragile isn’t faith — it’s the theory we built around it.”

Dobbs, polishing nothing in particular, muttered, “There are standards.”

“And justice matters,” Sandy agreed. “But listen — Rowan Williams once suggested that the cross is, at least partly, what happens when we reject Jesus’ way of living. We push him out of the city. We say, ‘We’ll manage civilisation without all that love and forgiveness, thank you very much.’”

Horse stared.

“So the cross isn’t just a transaction in heaven.”

“It’s also a mirror,” Tim said. “It shows what happens when love is expelled from the centre.”

Horse was quiet now.

“So the dividing line isn’t between people who’ve chosen the correct mechanism.”

Sandy shook her head.

“It may be between people who treat the cross as a solved equation... and people who let it remain a mystery that judges us, forgives us, and changes us.”

Perry leaned back.

“So salvation isn’t about selecting the right diagram.”

“It might,” Sandy said, “be about holding fast to the crucified One, not the crucifying Act. Believing — in the old sense — holding dear. Trusting him enough to let him back into the city.”

Horse looked down at his phone again.

“They’re very sure online.”

“Yes,” said Sandy.

“But the thief wasn’t.”

“Which is more frightening — losing a theory, or losing trust?”

Disclaimer

St Faithful’s is fictional. The affection is real.

Books by Canon Tom Kennar (including 'The Parish Life' – about St Faithful’s) are available in print and e-book. Merchandise lurks online. See <https://tinyurl.com/4k9jtpbe> for more details.

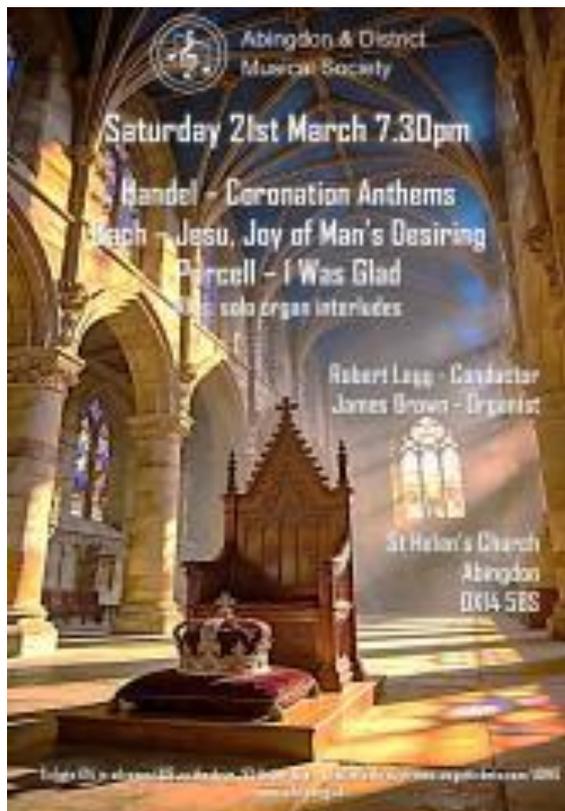
Holy Week and Easter Services

	St Helen's	St Michael's	St Nicolas'
Palm Sunday 29th March	10.30: Sung Eucharist with Palm Procession	9.30am: Sung Mass with Palm Procession	8am: Holy Communion (1662) 11.15am: Holy Communion and blessing of Palms
30th, & 31st March, 1st April	8pm: Compline with Address Preacher: John Barton	7pm: Said Mass with address Preacher: Elizabeth Birch	
Maundy Thursday 2nd April		12.30pm: Said Mass 7.30pm: Parish Eucharist with Washing of Feet, Stripping of the Altar and Watch of the Passion until 10.00pm ending with Compline.	
Good Friday 3rd April	2pm: Good Friday Liturgy 8pm: Outdoor Stations of the Cross starting at the North Door	10am: Children's service and craft activities 2pm: Liturgy of the Passion	10am: Service of the Word and Proclamation of the Cross Church in Abingdon 11.45 Procession from Abingdon Library 12.00 Service of Witness (Ecumenical Service suitable for all ages)
Easter Saturday April 4th	9.10am: Morning Prayer for Holy Saturday 8pm: Lighting of the New Fire, Vigil and Renewal of Baptism Vows/ Baptism	8pm: Lighting of the New Fire, Vigil and Renewal of Baptism Vows, and first eucharist of Easter	
Easter Day	8am: Holy Communion (1662) with hymns 10.30am: Sung Eucharist for Easter with all-age address (followed by Easter Egg Hunt)	9.30am: Family Mass for Easter	11.15: Holy Communion and Blessing of the Paschal Candle



Springtime Events

Compiled by Louise Heffernan



St HELEN'S CHURCH

**AGNOSTICS
ANONYMOUS**

'Are you saved?
Ideas of salvation in the Bible
and today.'

Led by John Barton, with Jennifer Brown.

Tuesday 24th March 2026
6pm to 7.30pm

In Parish Centre (opposite main door of St Helen's)

FREE **Everyone Welcome**

Contact for more information: Jill Gant 01235 528929
https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_events.html

Faith Forum

In this series, we will be looking at different aspects of liturgy.

**Sunday 22nd March at the Parish Centre
12.45pm preceded by a light lunch at 12.20pm**

Stations of the Cross

St Michael and All Angels Church on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm (for about 40 minutes) on 3, 10, 17 March; these will be lay led. If you park on Park Road or Park Crescent come in to get a parking permit.

Abingdon Artists



© @abingdonartists
abingdonartists.org.uk
Free entry & demonstrations - see website for information.

Cranmer Commemoration play

The Prayer Book Society is staging the play **The Trial of Thomas Cranmer** at the **University Church in Oxford on 21 March, 11 am to 4 pm**, as part of this year's Cranmer Commemoration. More details of the day, the play and how to book are available at this link:

<https://www.pbs.org.uk/event/cranmer26>

The day starts with Choral Matins at 11 am

Church in Abingdon Good Friday Procession of Witness and Open Air Service

This will take place on **Friday 3 April 2026**: the procession will leave from Abingdon Library at **11.45 am** through the precinct to Abingdon Market Place for a service at 12 noon. We will be accompanied by the Salvation Army band and the Revd Carol Hamilton-Foyn will lead the service. All welcome.

Oxford Playhouse, The Passion

Friday 27 March 2026, 3 pm and 7.30 pm:

<https://www.oxfordplayhouse.com/events/the-passion>

Set against a background of occupied territory in first century Judea, The Passion by The LAMPS Collective (by Chris Matthewman and Sam Pullen-Campbell) follows three very different individuals over the course of the week leading up to the first Easter. Suitable for 12+. Tickets £12/£14. Duration 1 h 15 min.

Dates for your Diary



Cream Tea
St Michael & All Angels' Church,
Park Road



Saturday 25th April
2.30 – 4.30 pm

Tea/coffee with scone/cake £5
Proceeds to church funds
All welcome




ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH
CONCERT

Wantage Academy Brass
CARITAS Children's Choir
Wantage Youth Band

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH
PARK ROAD ABINGDON OX14 1DS
SATURDAY 9 MAY 2026 at 6 pm

ADULT TICKETS £12, CONCESSIONS £10, 16 & UNDER FREE
Available from: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FYLI> or at the door
Refreshments available

RAISING FUNDS FOR THE ABINGDON BRIDGE, THE CHURCH AND TARIRO – HOPE FOR YOUTH IN ZIMBABWE







1. Balliol College
reflected in a
puddle on Broad
Street Oxford

4	9	3	2	1	5
6	3	5	4	2	1
2	5	1	9	4	3
1	2	4	5	3	9
5	1	2	3	6	4
3	4	6	1	5	2

Christ Church on sea?

Photograph by David Bevington



News from the Dawsons:

We are settling in well to life in Kelsall - a very lively village. The move was challenging with a 2-day delay in completion. Not what we wanted 5 days before Christmas. Thank goodness we had the family just around the corner to provide us with hospitality and give us a lovely Christmas.

We have been overwhelmed by the welcome at church and in the village. Everyone has been so friendly.. You will not be surprised to know that we have joined the small but enthusiastic church choir and I have joined the catering team for the Wednesday Welcome Cafe which serves the village. The parish is ecumenical so we share Rev. Susan with the Methodist Church, and Sunday services alternate between the two places of worship. Mothering Sunday worship promises to be interesting with the Methodist church providing the venue for a cafe style service!

Norman has started rowing with Northwich Rowing Club where they have a masters crew and I have joined a Pilates class and a ballet class in Chester. I go to WI with Mary but there is no MU in the village so I shall become a diocesan member.

The house is a work in progress with lots still to do. We are awaiting the fitting of the smallest bedroom into a study for Norman in about 2 weeks' time. Until then we have nowhere to put 20 boxes of books so upstairs is chaotic. Plenty more things we want to do not to mention the garden, but the latter will have to wait till the weather improves. The main thing is we are here and settled and it is good to have Mary and family 4 minutes around the corner. We are on an elevated site with views of the North Wales mountains so when the sun is shining it is glorious.

Puzzles

1. Where is this? (a David Bevington photo)



	5		6	4	3
4					5
6					
		6	1	5	
1	2	4		3	
		2			

2. Complete the grid so that every row, column and long diagonal contains the numbers 1,2,3,4,5 and 6

Answers on page 13

Useful Weblinks:

Services: for the latest news see the Parish Website:

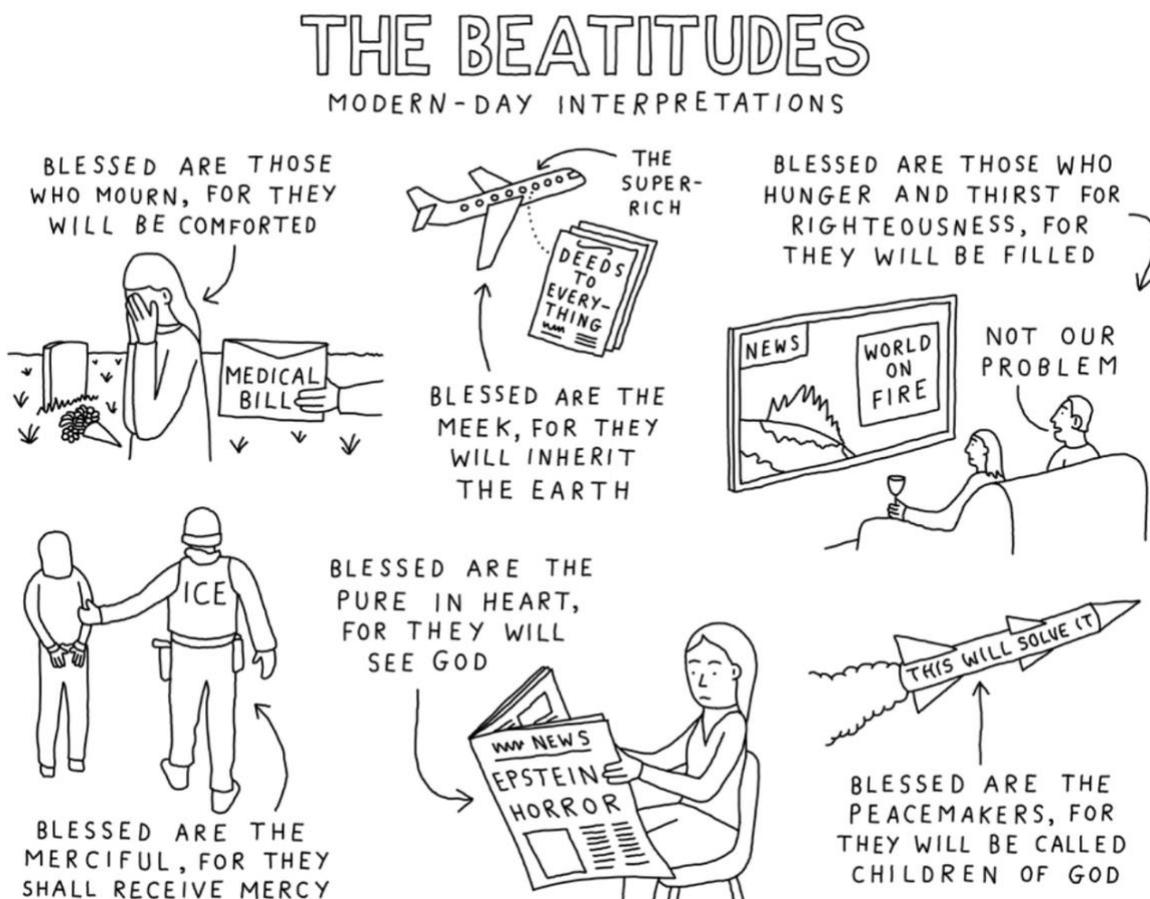
<https://abingdonparish.org.uk>

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

Finally, from Dave Walker,



Thanks and all good wishes to all contributors and to you, the readers.

The next issue will be published on April 5th Easter Day. Please help us by sending feedback, ideas and contributions to Candle@abingdonparish.org.uk

Clocks! NB British Summer Time starts on Palm Sunday, 29th March. Clocks go forward an hour!