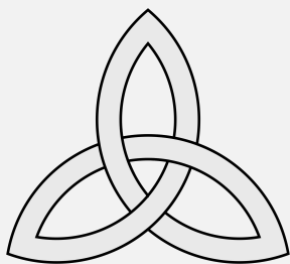


Issue 7:
September 2026



The triquetra: a
symbol of the trinity

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A candle in...

THE *W*INDOW
News and Views from the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames



A pollen-laden bee emerging from a hollyhock in the Parish Centre front garden
Photo: David Bevington

Inside:

Eco-theology at Faith Forum
A sermon not preached...
The prose and poetry of Tony Richmond
The Greenbelt Festival
Fairtrade Fortnight
Huw Rhys James at St Michael's
A new face at Trinity Learning
A lot of events
Pictures from David Bevington
A Poem from Eileen Duckett
and, of course, a puzzle and a cartoon

Exploring Eco-Theology

The July issue of *A Candle in the Window* brought to our attention various aspects of our efforts as a parish to be more eco-friendly and to work towards Eco-Church awards. Rob Rutherford wrote about a wildlife survey of the St Helen's churchyard areas that was done, Eluned Hallas highlighted the parish environmental policy, and Louise Heffernan wrote about wildlife-friendly gardening. And it should be noted that St Nicolas have already achieved the Eco-Church silver award, and continue to look for ways to be more environmentally friendly. If you haven't read the creation care articles in the July issue, I urge you to do so – they are full of interesting information and useful ideas!

Caring for creation isn't something that we do as a one-off and then move on to the next thing. It's an ongoing process – more than that, it's a way of living gently, thinking carefully about what we do and what we buy, of loving our neighbours (human and non-human) as ourselves. The Church is now entering a liturgical season now recognised as Creationtide. This season, which runs from the beginning of September to the Feast of St Francis on 4th October, offers us the opportunity to think more carefully about the earth as God's creation, humanity as its caretakers, and our relationship under God to non-human animals, plant life, and the environment.

Our Autumn Faith Forum series this year 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. Our own Margaret Adam will open the series in September with a talk on The Goodness of Creation. This will be followed in October by Hannah Mann, Environment Programme Director for Oxford Diocese who will speak to us on Creation Care as Act of Praise. Our final Faith Forum talk will be in November, when I will look at whether God's plan is for a new or a renewed Earth.

Faith Forum meets in the Parish Centre on the 4th Sunday of the month and when possible, the talks are also streamed on Zoom. A buffet lunch is served from 12.15pm and talks begin at 12.45pm. We aim to finish by 1.30pm. Do join us if you can.

Autumn Faith Forum Dates:

September 27: The goodness of creation (Margaret Adam)

October 25: Creation care as act of praise (Hannah Mann)

November 22: A new or a renewed earth? (Jen Brown)

Jen Brown
Rector



A bee on purple loosestrife above
Abingdon Lock
Photo: David Bevington

A sermon not preached

This year, the Church of England has introduced a new festival, the Feast of Creation in Christ, to start the season of Creationtide, on Sunday 6 September this year. As we have had the lectionary books (books of Sunday readings) in our churches for some while now, they don't include this new feast day and its associated readings, and so it wasn't the subject of my preaching on Sunday. What follows is the sermon I might have preached, had we been keeping this new festival – something I think we might want to consider in future years. The readings on which the following is based are Colossians 1.15–20 and Matthew 8.23–27.

“Who is Jesus?” This is the question that is asked – and answered – throughout the texts of the New Testament. In our gospel reading, the question is asked pretty plainly by, of all people, his own disciples: “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?” or, as some translations have it, “Who is this, that even the winds and the waves obey him?” The epistle reading answers the question just as plainly, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation,” and it then goes on to explain what that means.

Who Jesus is matters. Who Jesus is determines how we relate to him and how we understand ourselves and the world in relation to him.

The answer to the question, “Who is Jesus?” that is given to us in the Colossians passage makes it clear that he is the one in whom and through whom all that exists came into being. There is nothing that precedes or exceeds Jesus. In other words, there is nothing greater than him, not even “thrones or dominions or rulers or powers.”

At the time the letter to the Colossians was written, this was, of course, a way of saying that not even the Roman Empire with all its might and authority was greater than Jesus. That's still true today: Jesus is greater than any human power or authority. We should obey lawful authority and be good citizens. Of course we should. But there may be times when Jesus' law of love comes into conflict with things being advocated by human authorities. That is not a cue for us to become lawless, but it should spur us into speaking out, or engaging in lawful, peaceful protest, especially when we see injustice.

And we do well to remind ourselves that Jesus is greater than the things that dominate our society – excessive consumerism, the pursuit of wealth and power, and social media and the things it sometimes encourages, like conspiracy theories and tribalism. We are not to get caught up in these things, nor are we to give into despair because of them, because we look to one who is above them. In him, “the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.” There is, therefore, nothing and no-one else deserving of worship. In fact, the Matthew passage also tells us this by alluding to a passage from the Old Testament. Even as the disciples asked the question, I think they knew the answer – at least, they would have done if they were familiar with the psalms (and I'm pretty sure they were). Psalm 65 says of God, “You silence the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves.” In the stilling of the sea, Jesus was demonstrating that the fullness of God dwelled within him.

The passage from Colossians tells us more than just the fact that things in creation are subordinate to Jesus. It also makes clear that nothing is outside of Jesus' grace and love. “through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.” All creation is reconciled to God in Christ. And because all things, including us, are being reconciled to God in and through Christ, by extension, we are also being reconciled to one another and all creation, at the same time. We are called, therefore, to live out that reconciliation in the way that we treat one another in the Church, the way we treat all humanity, other creatures, and the earth itself. That work may not be fully complete until the day when God's kingdom arrives in all its fullness, but it is ongoing. As Christ's body on earth, the Church is called to take part in it; to be part of the renewing of creation.

Who is this Jesus? He is the one through whom all creation came to be, in whom all creation is being restored and reconciled to God, by whom we ourselves are reconciled not only to God, but to one another and all creation, he is the one in whom all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell; the one for whom we live, and to whom we give thanks and praise.

Jen Brown, Rector

Coming Soon: An article about St Frideswide's Way

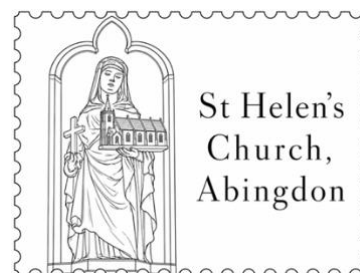
St Frideswide's Way begins at her shrine in the Cathedral, which once brought medieval pilgrims from far and wide to Oxford. The route follows a picturesque 40-mile stretch of the Thames Path, with stops along the way at 24 different churches in Oxfordshire and Berkshire's riverside towns and villages.

The walk finishes at the ruins of Reading Abbey. Founded by King Henry I in 1135, it was one of the largest and wealthiest royal monasteries in Europe. Prior to the Reformation, the abbey held over 230 relics, including one traditionally venerated as the hand of St James, bringing large numbers of pilgrims to Reading.

As an accredited Camino Inglés route, St Frideswide's way can be walked as part of the Camino de Santiago (The Way of St James), the famous Europe-wide network of medieval pilgrimage routes culminating at the Cathedral of St James in Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Walking the Camino has seen a huge increase in popularity in recent years, with nearly 440,000 pilgrims across Europe walking to Santiago in 2022 by the different available routes, including over 24,000 on the Camino Inglés.

At Reading, walkers can carry on in the footsteps of their medieval predecessors by continuing on the connecting Way of St James, another Camino route which culminates at Southampton, where English pilgrims would once have boarded ships to A Coruña and journeyed onwards to Santiago.

Taken from the Oxford Diocesan website



The logo for St Frideswide's Way and the stamps collected by pilgrims at our two church closest to the route.

This piece, first published in November 2023, is reprinted here in tribute to Tony Richmond who was a great supporter of and contributor to this magazine. Reconciliation was always his hope. RIP Tony.

Reconciliation – South African style

Tony Richmond

“Brand, are you a Christian? Well then, don’t sit there – come and join us for Communion.” The story of Nelson Mandela’s words to the young, white Afrikaner warder who was standing sentry to the top-security prisoners recently transferred from Robben Island, is told by the Revd Harry Wiggett in his book, “A Time to Speak”^{*}.

Mandela was meanwhile being slated by the South African Government and much of the Press as the antichrist, an evil communist who, according to gossip, slaughtered white babies for medicine and wanted to drive the whites into the sea.

But here he was, receiving Holy Communion once a month, and at his invitation Warder Brand removed his peaked cap, drew up a chair to the table, and they all, African Nation Congress prisoners, Dutch Reformed Church warder and Anglican priest, received the Jesus love meal together.

When Harry Wiggett published a letter in the Sunday Times refuting the claims that Mandela was a dangerous communist, his permission to minister to Mandela was withdrawn.

But justice was done in the end, Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years in prison, and became President of South Africa. He set an amazing example of Christian reconciliation in a country that had been so divided by colour prejudice.

And it was Mandela who appointed the Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the former Methodist President Dr Alex Boraine to head his new Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Healing our Past. The TRC was created to investigate gross human rights violations during the period of the Apartheid regime from 1960 to 1994, including abductions, killings and torture. It applied to the victims of state power and equally to the victims of “terrorist” attacks. Controversially the TRC was empowered to grant amnesty to perpetrators who confessed their crimes truthfully and completely.

The TRC took the testimony of about 21,000 victims; and 2,000 of them appeared at public hearings. The commission received 7,112 amnesty applications. Amnesty was granted in 849 cases and refused in 5,392 cases. It made detailed recommendations for a reparations program including financial, symbolic and community reparations. The commission proposed that each victim or family should receive approximately \$3,500 USD each year for six years. Prosecution should be considered in cases where amnesty was not sought or was denied, if evidence existed.

And, importantly, the commission further recommended that South Africa’s society and political system should be reformed to include faith communities, businesses, the judiciary, prisons, the armed forces, health sector, media and educational institutions in a reconciliation process.

After following the proceedings of the TRC, the Revd Harry Wiggett wrote to a poet who had suffered under apartheid: “What I want to confess to you and ask for forgiveness from you, is that although I fought verbally against the apartheid regime and voted anti-Nat (when I had the chance to vote), I still deep down was grateful that I was white and secure under the unjust “Christian” government that was ordering my security and safety. I feel guilty and pray for forgiveness for the fact that without batting an eyelid I paid my Income Tax so that you, my brother, could be harassed and tortured and denied your human rights.”

The poet, Sandile Dikeni, was deeply moved. He wrote: “what touched me was that the Reverend knew from my writing, that I was an atheist, but he still found words that could cross the divide between us and reach me as a fellow South African and a human being. After having been so cynical about the TRC, I now find myself prepared to congratulate them on a job well done. Yes, that is what made me happy last week – true and honest attempts to jump over the divides that South Africa has created for us.”

^{*}“A Time to Speak” by Harry Wiggett, preText Publishers, PO Box 23199, Claremont 7735, South Africa, ISBN 978-0-9802596-6-7

This poem, written by Tony Richmond, was read at his funeral and reprinted here with permission from Lyn Richmond.

Tony visited Italy from South Africa on a scholarship. It was, I think, his first experience of Europe.

The World (after Perugia, 1966)

The world's so big, and sometimes I
Am lost, amid a plethora
Of tongues and travel maps, and sigh
And relish my nostalgia
For the old life, sweet tales of yore,
Here old pride, there a ritual grand;
Things foreign? Fables! Nothing more.
Where friendship - was? When hand
shook hand,
When I could smile and dream - before
I left my dear, parochial land.

An obituary for Tony can be found here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2026/sep/04/tony-richmond-obituary>

The Bright Field

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realise now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying

on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

R.S. Thomas

The Greenbelt Festival:

Gordon Brown and family

“Somewhere to believe in”. This has been the strapline for Greenbelt Festival for a long time, and it sums up the feeling and fundamental ethos of the whole event.

Over the August Bank Holiday weekend, we trundled our ancient caravan to the beautiful setting of Boughton House near Kettering for Greenbelt’s final time at this venue as it looks for a new location after 12 years in the current location. As soon as you arrive you are met with kindness, respect and a sense that everyone is truly welcome. A very similar feeling to how we have experienced coming to St Helen’s in the last year.

Whether you are a family (we took our two children), in a group of friends or someone by themselves, there is something for you at Greenbelt. Founded in 1973, it certainly is a very different prospect from the first gathering at a farm in Suffolk to its current state hosting ten thousand festival-goers with many streams of events. That said, the principles remain the same; it is rooted in Christian tradition, but – as the festival says itself – it’s a place where artistry meets activism, the secular meets the spiritual and politics meets positivity. Importantly, it’s a place where to come together and to share.

This year we were treated to many musical treats including a headline act from The Proclaimers. If you don’t know Greenbelt then don’t be fooled into thinking it’s just a stage with acts playing on it, there’s everything from quiet, reflective sessions such as Quaker Epilogue to joining in with the Iona Community and their “Big Sing” event. One of my favourite staples of the festival is “Beer and Hymns” which is exactly as it sounds, fuelled by a beverage from the close-by “Jesus Arms” beer tent.



Photo: Gordon Brown

Greenbelt is not just about music, the talks and debates are another key part of the weekend, with headliners this time including activist and former Archdeacon of Southend Mina Smallman MBE, musician Charlotte Church and the most arrested priest in UK history Sue Parfitt. There’s also many performers, poetry groups, dance and music workshops, as well as sports, plenty of children’s activities (which we enjoyed), food venues and stalls.

Although we had a very damp (and muddy!) Saturday, the sun cleared for the Sunday communion service where the whole programme stops so we can gather as a community at 10am. This remains by far the most important part of my Greenbelt, and it’s easy to see why when you see everyone coming together to sing, pray, reflect and just be. Every year Greenbelt has a saying which is used throughout the time together and this year it was “Let it all go”, partly reflecting the leaving of Boughton House and moving somewhere new for 2028.

During the communion service this year we heard from Lamma Mansour, a Christian Palestinian from Nazareth who gave us a very real take on what “let it all go” means to her when you’re faced with losing your house and possessions, but also explored the themes of solidarity, hope as a human right, and the de-occupation of imagination.

We also sang, prayed and shared communion with those around us, and each one of us was given a

memento to keep with us until we meet again next time.

The final act was to show us a two-year-old oak tree, which was carried from the stage and planted straight away in the festival site (aptly near the Caravan of Love). This is all Greenbelt wants to leave as a thank you to Boughton House, and each year I'm so grateful that we all clear the site beautifully when we leave, compared to the acres of tents and rubbish I have seen since left at Reading and Leeds Festivals.

On Sunday, the last day of the programme, we enjoyed the warm evening while the children were in the "Late Night Village" children's activity. Afterwards we all shared chips and took a buggy back to our distant caravan as a treat.

As we packed up on the Monday morning, I was reminded once more of the kindness and spirit of the festival as a steward was going round the camper field with a compressor trying to find the caravan with a flat tyre that had been reported.

We left at midday, letting it all go, but with good memories and gladness of another great Greenbelt Festival.



Photo: Gordon Brown



Photo: Anna Ryder 'The Bright Field' – see page 6 – read at the Festival by Michael Sheen

Quick Question – what do these things have in common?



Fairtrade Fortnight

Rob Rutherford



OK – not too hard. They all carry the Fairtrade mark.

Does Fairtrade still exist?

Yes it does and it is being celebrated and promoted in the fortnight from September 21st to October 4th 2026

What is 'Fairtrade'? It is a global movement, which aims to secure better prices, safe working conditions, environmental protection and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers. It has been represented in the UK for over 25 years by the Fairtrade Foundation.

When a product is certified as Fairtrade, it means the producer has been paid a fairer price – one that never falls below the Fairtrade minimum price, and which matches the market price when it's above this. This creates a safety net to cover the cost of sustainable production.

It also means the producer earns the Fairtrade Premium, an additional amount to fund community projects such as transport, machinery upgrades, health facilities and training to support farmers to manage the impacts of a changing climate (taken from the Waitrose Fairtrade pages). Fairtrade is unique: farmers and workers have representation at all levels of governance including 50 percent of decision-making power in the general assembly. That means everyone has a voice, not just a seat. Fairtrade Standards change regularly, tuned to real-world challenges. They protect land, health, and equality, promote environmental care, and support businesses in preventing human rights violations or environmental harm. Fairtrade requires farming co-operatives and businesses to operate democratically and transparently.

Fairtrade prohibits child labour. The Fairtrade Standards state that children below the age of 15 are not to be employed by Fairtrade producer organizations. Children below the age of 18 cannot undertake work that jeopardizes their education or development. Children are only allowed to help on family farms under strict conditions, including outside school hours or during holidays. It doesn't stop there!

So BUY FAIRTRADE wherever possible! You know it makes sense!

Huw Rhys James Recital: Sunday September 6th 2026

Rob Rutherford

On an afternoon when there were several cultural offerings in Abingdon, a good-sized audience in St Michael's Church heard a wonderful piano recital by Huw Rhys James.

Huw was born locally and still has family in Abingdon but his musical life is centred on Vienna where he holds an academic post at the Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna (MUK) where he is professor for vocal accompaniment. He is involved with various musical groups in Vienna but he also tours as a concert pianist. His concerts have taken him to many European countries as well as China.

The first half consisted of pieces by J.S.Bach: two preludes and fugues from the 'Well-Tempered Clavier', one in C Major, one in E major. Then the French Suite Nr 5 in G Major – a series of dance movements with differing number of voices. The final Gigue was wonderfully joyful. We could only imagine the dancers in a rather refined room in an eighteenth century stately home.

Huw not only played for us but gave us an introduction to each piece.

After refreshments, the second half allowed a much wider range of colours. It started with Schumann's Fantasia pieces op.12. (Phantasie Stücke). Huw explained that Schumann was being given a hard time by the father of Clara Wieck whom Robert Schumann was courting. These pieces, a form of communication between himself and Clara depict the two sides of Robert's personality which he called Eusebius - the quiet contemplative side - and Florestan, the extrovert, outgoing side. The dynamics of the piece reflect this almost bipolar personality. The movements included Aufschwung ('Soaring') allowing Huw to explore the loud, almost angry side of Schumann's frustrating relationship with Clara, and Warum? ('Why'), a more thoughtful questioning piece.

Two more impressionistic pieces about water drew the recital to a close. Ravel's Jeux d'eau involved incredibly delicate playing invoking the playing of and with water. Then Debussy's La Cathédrale Engloutie. Huw thought the title was aimed at the pianist to indicate the style in which it should be played but it certainly conjured up for this listener the sound of bells in the depths.

After sustained applause, Huw offered a beautiful encore in the form of 'Claire de Lune' by Debussy.

Another in this series of recitals is on Sunday 18th October at 15.00. It will be a Musical Tour of Europe with Christopher Brittan on Flute and Malcolm Pearce on Piano. Tickets £15.00



Introducing Hannah Richards, Education Development Officer at TrinityLearning, September 2026



I am delighted to be TrinityLearning's new Education Development Officer and look forward to joining the wonderful Trinity team. Having greatly benefitted from local toddler groups it is the perfect time to step into a role where I feel I can use my values and strengths to benefit local children. I look forward to being part of a charity that continues to innovate and deliver worthwhile initiatives for our community.



Having completed a BA (Hons) in Philosophy and an MA in Diplomacy at Nottingham University I then moved to Oxford to complete a PGCE. While my initial move to Abingdon was intended to be temporary, I completely fell in love with the town - its beautiful walks, rich history, and the fantastic opportunities it has provided for my family. Nearly 16 years later, we are very happy to call Abingdon home!

Following my PGCE, I spent 12 years as a primary teacher, most recently serving as Head of Lower Prep. During this role, I gained experience in managing teaching teams, encouraging academic engagement, and overseeing safeguarding as Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Beyond the classroom, one of my most cherished memories was serving as School Charity Coordinator, where I collaborated with some amazing local causes.

After a wonderful period at home with my daughter, who begins her own exciting journey into Reception this September, I have been focusing on further training. I recently completed a course on Children's Mental Health at Newbury College, as well as a foundation course in Art as Therapy. Since 2013, I have been a regular volunteer at the Oxford University Museums, most recently helping with Family Friendly Sundays at the Museum of Natural History. Being a volunteer myself has given me a deep appreciation for the vital role volunteers play, and the powerful human need to be part of something purposeful and valued.

Outside of work, I can usually be found growing flowers in the garden, lost in a good book, planning a new travel adventure with my family, or talking to our very chatty cat.

It has been lovely meeting many of our fantastic volunteers and trustees already. If we haven't crossed paths yet, please pop by in September to say hello!

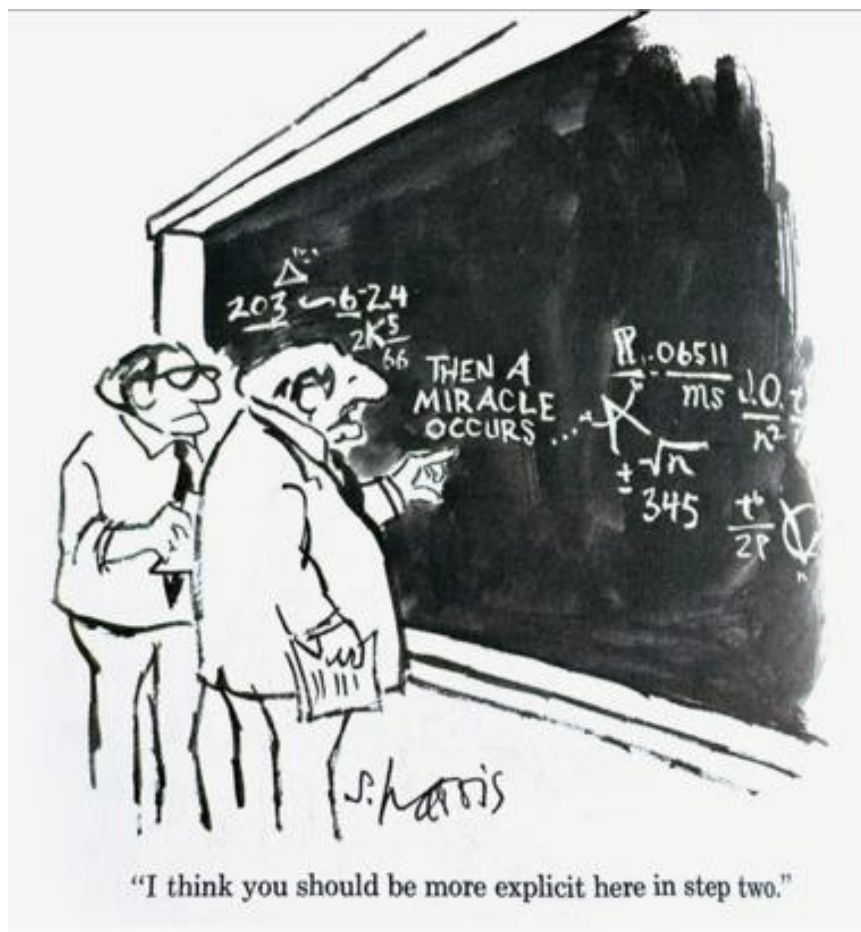
Volunteer opportunities for this September

TrinityLearning offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities including one off and on-going projects in local schools as well as roles in supporting projects through creating craft packs, knitting and crocheting small bears for our Bereavement Packs or helping to maintain school peace gardens. We are currently looking for volunteers for our Thinking Books project for the 2026-27 school year starting in September.

Thinking Books is TrinityLearning's mentoring scheme for primary schools. Our volunteer mentors go into schools regularly to meet children one-to-one or in small groups. They share reading of carefully selected books which start conversations about feelings and relationships. Thinking Books

volunteers commit to weekly one-hour sessions in a local primary school. TrinityLearning is committed to Safeguarding. We provide full training and support volunteers through the application process and DBS checks as well as providing ongoing support and training throughout the project.

If you're interested in Thinking Books or want to find out more about any of TrinityLearning's volunteer opportunities please contact Hannah at hannah.trinitylearning@gmail.com



A famous cartoon by Sydney Harris from the New Yorker. It arrived in Rob's Facebook feed

September + Events

Compiled by Louise Heffernan



A series of six evening sessions, on Thursdays 7.30 – 9.30 pm, starting on 17 September 2026 at Peachcroft Christian Centre. Which will explore 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 at

<https://www.peachcroftcc.org/community/parenting-course>



Heritage weekend

St Helen's will be open for Heritage weekend, 19 - 20 September 2026. There will be guided visits to the tower belfry and a chance to try out the organ, 2 – 4 pm, on Saturday, and quizzes and archives on display. Everyone is welcome - please come for a bacon butty and cup of tea!

St Nicolas' Church will also be open for visits.

Tuesday 15 September, Abbey Cinema

Launch of Abingdon against Domestic Abuse (AaDA), a new community initiative with a vision to create a town where all forms of domestic abuse are recognised early, challenged safely, and responded to with compassion, understanding, and with accessible local services. The evening will include a presentation on AaDA, followed by a screening of *The Burning Bed*, the 1984 film that helped transform public understanding of domestic abuse and bring the issue into mainstream discussion.

Book tickets here -

<https://theabbey.ac/web?film=6a85b45a9ad4c4148e7a12f7>

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.

September 27: The goodness of creation (Margaret Adam)

October 25th: Creation care as act of praise (Hannah Mann, Diocese of Oxford)

November 22: A new or a renewed earth? (Jen Brown)

See page 2 for more details


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



Saturday 26th September
2.30 – 4.30 pm
 Tea/coffee with scone/cake £5
 Proceeds to church funds
 All welcome

Oxford Gospel Choir concert

Join the Oxford Gospel choir concert at St Helen's on Saturday 3 October 2026 at 7.30 pm in support of www.familyofhope.co.uk, a school in rural Uganda that supports children with special educational needs.

Music at St. Michael's 2026

Sunday 18th October at 15.00
 A Musical Tour of Europe
 Christopher Brittan on Flute
 Malcolm Pearce on Piano
 Tickets £15.00



Quiet Garden Day

Join us at Aston Tirrold Centre for Reflection, Spring Lane, Aston Tirrold, OX11 9EJ on Saturday 19 September 2026, 10 am - 4 pm. Philip Mader-Grayson will lead 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.

Uniting in Prayer for Abingdon Thursday 8 October 2026, 7.30 pm at Abingdon Baptist Church. CiA invites you to an evening of prayer, worship and vision as well as the CiA AGM. All welcome. Refreshments provided.

Animal Blessing Service

Sunday 4th October 2026, 2pm

Church of St Michael & All Angels, Park Road

A short service with blessing of animals.*

♥ Garden of pet remembrance ♥



Refreshments to follow.



All well-behaved animals welcome!

Dogs must be on a lead; cats & small animals must be secured in suitable carriers, cages, or baskets

* If you have an animal you would like blessed but that would not be comfortable coming to the service, please bring a photo instead.

Regular events restarting in September

Desiring Life: The “Desiring Life” group meets in the Parish Centre lounge on Tuesday 15 Sep at 2.15 pm, and then fortnightly. We will be reading and discussing “Listening to the Music” by Guli Francis-Dehqani. New members welcome. Contact Rosalind Rutherford if you have any queries via candle@abingdonparish.org.uk

Mothers Union Meeting: Tuesday 13th October, 10.00-12.00pm in the lounge. A talk by local bee keeper David Busby.

Macmillan Coffee Morning, Thursday 15th October 10.00-12.00 noon, in the Parish Centre hall.

Circle Dancing at St Michaels’ – every first and third Thursday. 11.00 – 12 noon

Taizé Dancing at St Michaels’ – every first Thursday. 10.00 to 11.00 All welcome to both.

Music at the Unicorn – folk music now at St Helens’ Thursday 1st October and 15th October and more...: <https://musicattheunicorn.org.uk/>

Chamber Concerts at St Nicolas’- usually every second Sunday
<https://abbeychamberconcerts.org/concerts/>

Cafe@35 has reopened 10.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Thursday.

Back to 35: Abingdon Baptist Church welcomes over 50s to our sessions on the first and third Thursdays of the month. 10.30 to 11.30am. Admission £1. We have a variety of talks and interest groups. Doors open at 10 am for tea, coffee and homemade cakes. All welcome. 17 September: A history of Abingdon Baptist Church by Pam Pratt

8 am Communion Service Rather than alternating monthly between St Helen's and St Nicolas’, the 8 am BCP Holy Communion service will 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*

Evening services at St Helen’s Church at 5.30pm:

Taizé Prayer

This time of reflective contemplation, using chants from the Taizé community, takes place on the second Sunday (apart from in November).

Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday)

Service for Healing & Wholeness (4th Sunday)

Hymns for Professionals: (other suggestions welcome!)

Dentist: Crown him with many crowns

Contractor: The Church’s one foundation

Golfer: There is a green hill far away

Politician: Standing on the promise

Barrister: In the hour of trial

Dry Cleaner: O for a faith that will not shrink

Census taker: All people that on earth do dwell

Tax Officer: We give thee but thine own

Lollipop Lady: Where cross the crowded ways
of life

A poem by Nigel Beeton suggested by Cynthia:

Miracle at the Table:

The table is set, but no lavish spread
A simple communion of red wine and bread.
Simple yet holy – where heaven bends low
That those knelt before Thee Thy true grace may know.

We follow where firstly our Saviour has led
We listen to words that Jesus first said:
'This is My body, it's broken for you
And this is My blood, shed for you too.'

The bread that is broken, the wine seen outpoured
They tell of the sacrifice made of our Lord.
His body was broken that we might be saved
But death was defeated – He rose from the grave!

So, kneel in the stillness of this holy place
Gladly receiving these tokens of Grace.
Then go from here knowing His Spirit in you
Will help you to do what He'd have you do!

The September Quiz

Suggested by family Hallas

How many words (of three letters or more) can you make from September?

There are at least 81 words of 3 or more letters (this includes plurals ie bee / bees).
Including less common words gives a total of over 250

p t e e
s m
r b
e

Praise Be, It's Autumn

Eileen Duckett

You can keep spring and summer
It's autumn and winter for me.
I like drawing the curtains early
And sitting by the fire for tea.

I like a frosty morning
And it's even better if there is snow.
I am happy to wrap up warmly
And eat porridge for that inner glow.

In autumn there are blackberries for picking
Just right for a crumble or pie,
And shallots and onions for pickling
Although peeling them makes me cry.

I really love the food in winter,
Lots of soup and a hearty stew,
Steamed puddings like my Mum used to make
And using produce which my husband grew.

Of course these seasons have their downside,
I don't like colds or a dose of flu
And having to dry the washing indoors
Is a real pain to do.

But there's beauty in an autumn landscape
When the leaves change colour on the trees
And after this awfully hot summer
Let's have some colder weather please.

Puzzle Answers:
Don't peek!

tee	rest	pee	bets
step	reset	metres	bet
stem	reps	metre	best
steer	rep	metes	best
steeper	preset	meters	best
tree	pre	meter	best
terse	pets	mete	best
terms	peters	met	best
term	peter	merest	best
tepees	pet	mere	best
tepee	pester	meets	best
tempers	pest	meet	best
temper	pert	ester	best
temp	perm	esteem	best
tees	per	ere	best
teems	peers	embers	best
teem	peer	ember	best

Some of the words.....

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/>

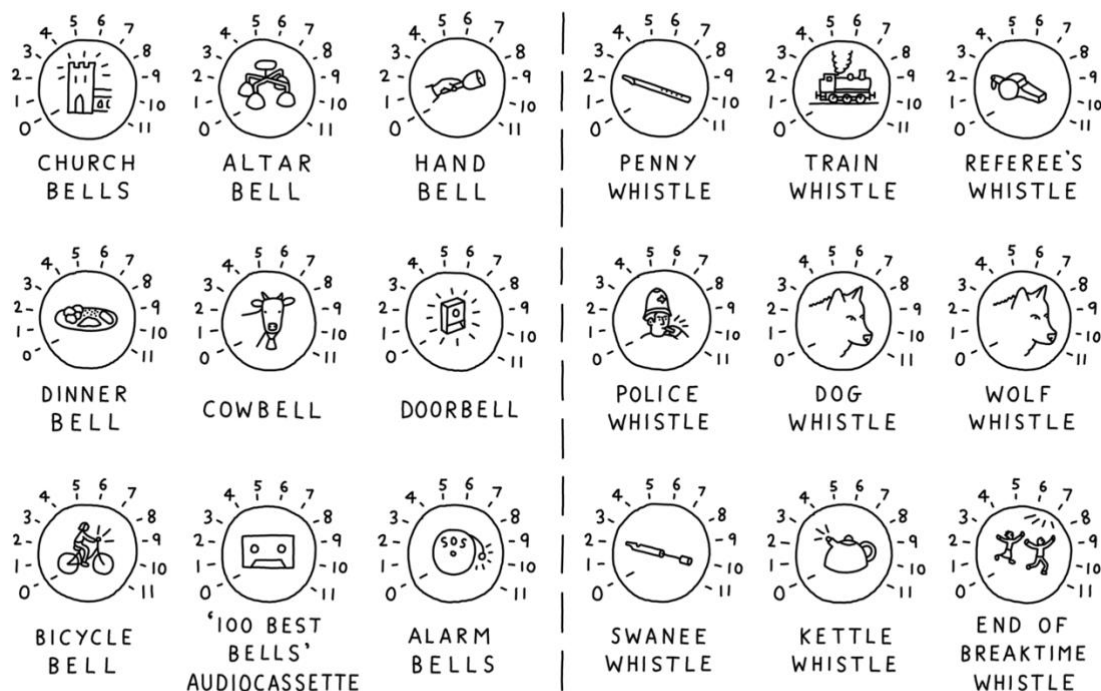
FOOD BANK. The Abingdon Foodbank is still very busy and anxious to keep up the support. Northcourt Road (Christ Church) is open to receive donations on Tuesday and Friday mornings between 9.30 am and 1.00 pm. **Abingdon Foodbank South** serves the people of South Abingdon on Wednesdays between 12.30 and 2pm and is based in Preston Road Community Centre. It is a full service – not just a distribution point. Any food donated in the marked boxes in Waitrose will go to the Foodbank. Any food donated at Tesco goes to the SOFEA run Community Larder based at Trinity Church centre on Fridays.

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:

THE NEW SOUND SYSTEM



IT HAS ALL THE BELLS AND WHISTLES

CartoonChurch.com

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

The next issues will be published on October 18th and then November 8th. Please help us by sending feedback, ideas and contributions to Candle@abingdonparish.org.uk