



# St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

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**10 May 2026 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

**Christian Aid Week 10 – 16 May**

## **Regular Service Times**

**Sundays:** Sung Mass, 9.30 am  
**Tuesdays:** Silent Reflections, last Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm (except December)  
**Thursdays:** Said Mass, 12.30 pm  
Moving into Stillness, Taizé circle dancing with silent interludes, usually first Thursday of the month, 9.45 am to 10.45 am.

## **Contacts**

**Team Rector:** The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown  
Email: [rector@abingdonparish.org.uk](mailto:rector@abingdonparish.org.uk)

**Team Vicar:** Vacancy

**Churchwardens:** Miss Joyce Kelly (01235 533555 / 07833 535768)  
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Mrs Louise Heffernan (01235 525412 / 07779 650968)  
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**Associate Priest** The Revd Dr A. K. M. Adam (AKMA)  
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**Bookings\*:** Miss Joyce Kelly (as above)

**Parish Office:** The Parish Centre Office is normally open from Monday to Thursday, **10 am to 1 pm.**

**Administrator:** During normal working hours phone or leave a message on:  
Telephone (01235 520144)  
e-mail: [administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk](mailto:administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk)

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

***Items for inclusion in the next pew leaflet to be sent to David Duce by midday on Tuesday.***

***Telephone 522591***

***[pewleaflet@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk](mailto:pewleaflet@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk)***

***[\*for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals please contact the Parish Office]***

**We welcome our Team Rector, The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown, to preside and preach at Mass today**

☩ Lift up your hearts. ☩ We lift them to the Lord.

Familiar words from the dialogue between celebrant and people at the start of the Eucharistic Prayer. However they also appear in another context:

Deacon The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Deacon Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Deacon Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

A clue to the context is that they are sung by the Deacon. This is in fact a part of the Exultet, sung by the Deacon at the Easter Vigil. (Some of the sources used here use the spelling *Exsultet*, though *Exultet* will be used here for consistency.) After the blessing of the new fire and lighting the paschal candle, the clergy and congregation process into church. The candle is placed in its stand and the Deacon begins to sing the Exultet:

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!

Exult, all creation around God's throne!

Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!

Sound the trumpet of salvation!

sung at our Easter Vigil this year by Fr AKMA. The second section of the prayer following the dialogue above is reminiscent of a preface to the eucharistic prayer, commencing:

It is truly right that with full hearts and minds and voices

we should praise the unseen God, the all-powerful Father, and his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

rising to a crescendo in the final section:

May the Morning Star which never sets find this flame still burning:

Christ, that Morning Star, who came back from the dead, and shed his peaceful light on all mankind,

your Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Exultet (*Rejoice*) is an ancient form of praise, probably originating in 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century Spain, Italy and France. The prayer recounts the wonders of the saving work of Christ, whose new and risen light, shining in the darkness, is represented by the Paschal Candle. Again and again, the prayer tells of Christ's work, which comes to completion on this night of Easter, drawing much of its symbolism from the Old Testament. The full text can be found in the Easter Liturgy booklet linked from our Prayer and Worship Resources web page (at the bottom of the page).

But why should I write about the Exultet now? There is an aspect of the Exultet that I only discovered last week in an article by Fr George Guiver CR in the latest issue of *CR Review*, the quarterly publication of the Community of the Resurrection. (Some readers will remember Fr George was with us for Holy Week in Fr Peter Bradley's time.) The article is headed *Exultet Rolls*. Fr George writes that there are old illustrations of the Deacon singing the hymn from memory with his hands raised up as he faces the candle. Repeatedly the words of the phrase 'this is the night' ring out 'the night when we were redeemed, death was conquered, sin overcome, the night when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, the night Christ rose from the tomb.'

There are some surviving examples of Exultet Rolls, scrolls of parchment with the text of the Exultet, dating from the 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Rolls were very long and as the Deacon worked through the Roll it was allowed to fall over the front of the lectern from the elevated platform (Ambo), from which scripture was proclaimed. There are illustrations of a second deacon catching the Roll and rolling it up again. The text of the Exultet is interspersed with rich illustrations, one strange feature of which is that they are upside down with respect the text. One reason is that the Latin text would not have been readily understood by the people so the illustrations would tell the story of the text and as the Roll was unfurled, the illustrations would be visible in the right orientation to the people standing around. There are some examples of Rolls with the illustration and text in the same orientation again requiring two deacons, one by the lectern to unfurl the Roll, the second standing below to sing the text. Exultet Rolls seem to have been a specific tradition of Southern Italy.

Examples of Exultet Rolls can be found on-line and the Prayer and Worship page contains links to some examples. I came across a web page from the Liturgy Institute at the University of London advertising a course in 2024 – for a practical exploration in creating an Exultet Scroll <https://liturgyinstitute.org/scroll/> Fr George concluded his article with a thought for something to try at the next Easter Vigil – make your own Exultet scroll using downloaded images or paint yourself. Not sure though that our Team Rector would provide two deacons!

David Duce

**Jenni Collins** We received the news on Sunday that Jenni died on 1 May following a long illness. Jenni was a very active member of our congregation until prevented by illness. All our readers who knew Jenni will have their own memories of her and ways to remember her. One phrase that came to my mind as I was thinking about this was a phrase from a prayer written by Fr Nicolas CR, founder of TARIRO. 'Grant Lord, ... a willingness to do the things that need to be done, when the opportunity comes our way.' Jenni had this 'willingness' in abundance. She could always be relied upon to roll-up-her-sleeves and apply herself to what needed to be done. Just to give a few examples from many: the church garden, cycling for Ride & Stride, helper for the Lunch Club at St Michael's and general kitchen duties (serving, laying up tables, washing up, you name it, Jenni did it), charity fund-raising, the Church Council, always enthusiastic and contributing ideas. Outside the church one of Jenni's roles was volunteering at the Old Station House care home. She could often be seen taking a resident for coffee in one of the coffee shops in the Market Place. In this role she received a Volunteer of the Year Award. She was also a keen supporter of HfT. She was always on hand too, along with Mike, to offer support to the Ireland Rugby team and to their favourite folk groups! I came across something that Jenni wrote after her illness was diagnosed: "the consultants 'have advised me to enjoy life – which I plan to do everyday!'" I feel sure that becoming grandparents added much to Jenni's enjoyment of life (and Mike's), despite her illness. What underpinned all of this was a deep love and concern for people. As Louise commented: 'she showed real kindness to so many – many in the congregation will know how warm-hearted and loving she was.' It is a privilege to have known Jenni. May she rest in peace and rise in glory. To Mike and family, we send our condolences.

*David Duce*

**Ascension Day Thursday 14 May** There will be a Said Mass as usual at **12.30 pm** at **St Michael's** and in the evening a **Parish Communion at 7.30 pm in St Nicolas' Church.**

**Team Vicar Vacancy** The announcement of a vacancy for a Team Vicar in the Abingdon-on-Thames Benefice has appeared on the diocesan web site. This includes a link to the Benefice profile. The closing date for applications specified is 28 May and the date for interviews 24 June. See

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/vacancies/team-vicar--abingdon-on-thames-benefice.php>

**Key Liturgical Dates in May / June at St Michael's**

14 May (Thursday) Ascension Day (12.30 pm Said Mass at St Michael's, 7.30 pm Parish Communion at St Nicolas')

24 May Pentecost (9.30 am at St Michael's)

31 May Trinity Sunday (**10 am Parish Corporate Mass at St Michael's**)

4 June (Thursday) Corpus Christi (12.30 pm Said Mass at St Michael's, **7.30 pm Parish Mass at St Michael's**)

**Cream Teas** We are delighted to report that our first Cream Tea was a great success, making a very pleasant afternoon for all who came. Very many thanks to everyone who helped in any capacity, whether it was distribution of publicity material, baking cakes, serving and clearing up or setting up and then restoring the church for Sunday worship. Special thanks to Glynne for entertaining us all so wonderfully on the piano. We raised just over £560 for church funds – all thanks to the St Michael's team who made it happen.

The next Cream Tea will take place on **Saturday 30 May**. I have placed some fliers and posters in the side aisle and would appreciate it very much if you were able to take some to distribute, whether a single poster for a coffee shop you plan to visit or a bundle for a few places or a street. Thank you, *Louise*.

**The Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting** Joyce Kelly and Louise Heffernan were nominated for election as Church Wardens and duly elected at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Hilary Clare was nominated for election to the Parochial Church Council for a 3 year term of office and Alex Scott and Sue Scott were nominated for election to Deanery Synod. All three nominations were approved. Congratulations and thanks to all five.

**The Archdeacon's Visitation** for the Dorchester Area, Abingdon Deanery, will be on Thursday 4 June at 7.30 pm at Wantage SS Peter and Paul, Church Street, Wantage. During this service, Church Wardens for the coming year will formally begin their terms of office after being sworn in. Thursday 4 June is Corpus Christi and the time clashes with our Corpus Christi evening Mass, so some may opt for an alternative Visitation such as one to be held in Dorchester Abbey on Monday 22 June at 7.30 pm.

**Sunday Worship at St Helen's Church** St Helen's will live-stream their 10.30 am Eucharist through Zoom. The Zoom link can be found in the St Helen's Church newsletter (on-line) and on the Publications page at their web site. A recording of the sermon (audio and video) will be made available after the service on the St Helen's web site (<https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StH/StHpublications.html>). There is no evening service at St Helen's on 3 May.

The next Taizé service will be this Sunday, **Sunday 10 May in St Helen's Church at 5.30 pm.**

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

**Bishop Steven's** final service before his retirement will be on **Sunday 31 May at 5 pm at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford**. Spaces will be limited. Further details and apply for tickets at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/christchurchcathedral1/2108762>

The booking site says "Booking closes at 10pm on Sunday 10 May. We recommend securing a ticket at your earliest convenience as demand for places will be extremely high and only a few seats will be reserved for worshippers who arrive without a ticket."

The Service will also be broadcast on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/live/bfgiSABuvxg>  
**Abingdon Foodbank** currently needs oat milk, pesto, rice pudding, sardines & tuna, custard, UHT milk, cooking oil, coffee, hot chocolate, corned beef, squash and tinned fruit. It also needs carrier bags and shampoo.

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

**Christian Aid Week, 10 – 16 May:** For more information about this year's fund-raising campaign, see <https://caw.christianaid.org.uk/uk/about/what-christian-aid-week>. Donations to Christian Aid can be made on-line through a fundraising page for Abingdon:

<https://caw.christianaid.org.uk/fundraiser-2026/christines-fundraising-page>.

**Cakes & Ale Festival** to Commemorate St Edmund of Abingdon, **Saturday 16 May**. Events all day in our town centre and Churches. Talks, concerts etc – pick up a programme from the back of Church or read on-line <https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StEdmund.pdf>. A number of events are taking place at St Michael's: 9.45 – 10.45: Moving into Stillness Circle Dancing with Elizabeth Mitchell. Taster £3 donation. 3 pm to 5 pm Festival Recital (tickets £15 including refreshments) and 7 pm Celidh dancing (with Melobo Band & The Vale Islanders) tickets £15 (including first drink and cake), £10 under 18s. Tickets for ticketed events are available at the door or on-line – see the programme. We are committed to provide refreshments for the Festival Recital. We should be very grateful for any donations of cake and especially for some helpers to help serve teas, coffees and cakes. Money raised at this event will be shared between St Michael's and TAB. Please let Joyce or Louise know if you are able to help.

**Mothers' Union Meet on Tuesday 2 June, 2026 at 10:30 am** in the Parish Centre. The topic for the meeting is *Detailing MU Action and Outreach Projects* and the speaker Jean Vaughan. All are welcome.

**Time Out for Parents - The Primary Years – A course from Care for the Family** Thursdays 7.30 - 9.30pm, 4, 11, 18, 25 June, 9 and 16 July at Peachcroft Christian Centre, Abingdon. This course of six sessions is designed to help you negotiate the early years with confidence and build strong family relationships for the future. Open to all parents and carers of primary age children. For booking and more information visit the website:

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

**CiA News** The **April** issue of CiA News is available to download and there is a copy on the Notice Board by the welcome table. See [https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P\\_communications.html](https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_communications.html).

**A Candle in the Window** The May edition of the Parish Magazine will be available to download on Sunday 10th May from the Parish website [https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P\\_window.php](https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php). Earlier issues can also be found at this location.

## **Worship**

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**May** Celebrants and preachers for May are: 10 May, The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown; 17 May Fr AKMA, 24 May (Pentecost) The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown; 31 May (Trinity Sunday, Parish Corporate Mass at 10 am), The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown and Fr AKMA.

Sunday 10 May is the 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter. Monday to Wednesday are Rogation Days. Thursday is Ascension Day and Friday is the festival of Matthias the Apostle (transferred from Thursday). Commemorations during the week include: Tuesday: Gregory Dix, priest, monk, scholar, 1952 and Saturday: Caroline Chisholm, social reformer, 1877. **Rogation Days** are the three days before *Ascension Day*, when prayer is offered for *God's blessing on the fruits of the earth and on human labour*. *Common Worship* makes provision for Rogation Days along with other seasons and festivals of the agricultural year. (There is a link to this material on our *Prayer and Worship Resources* page.)

The tradition (suppressed at the Reformation, but later restored) arose of processional litanies, often around parish boundaries, concluding with a Mass. Five of the petitions in the litany are:

For the harvest of the soil and for the fruits of the earth in their seasons we pray. **Hear us, good Lord.**

For parts of the world where the harvests have failed we pray. **Hear us, good Lord.**

For charities, aid agencies and overseas development, we pray. **Hear us, good Lord.**

For traditional rural skills and crafts and for those who exercise them, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the right ordering of work in time of technological change; **hear us, good Lord.**

*Common Worship* also provides an Extended Preface for Rogation Days.

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise, almighty God and Father, through Jesus Christ your Son. Through him you have created us in your own image, and made us stewards of your good creation.

Through him you teach us to exult in the birds of the air, the lilies of the field, the precious and life-giving crops of the earth.

Through him you free us from the slavery of sin, giving him to die upon the cross and to rise again for our salvation.

Through him, you begin your work of new creation, as we look for a new heaven and a new earth in which your righteousness dwells.

Therefore, we join with angels and archangels, and give voice to every creature under heaven, for ever praising you and saying: [*Sanctus follows*]

### **The Middle East**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Prayers for the Peace of the World**

A prayer from the Church of England:

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:  
kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace  
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom  
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth  
that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward,  
till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

### **During another Season of Vacancies**

The prayer below is the prayer used for the appointment of a new Archbishop of Canterbury. But it is not entirely inappropriate in the current situation as the next stage of ministry in the parish of Abingdon is discerned.

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

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

The Church of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford, provided this prayer when they were recently seeking a new Vicar.

O God, who alone guides and guards the Church  
by your Spirit. Strengthen and encourage us  
in this time of uncertainty and opportunity, and inspire  
those who maintain our worship, and those engaged  
in the discernment and selection of a new Team Vicar.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

A prayer composed by the Vacancy in See Committee for the appointment of a new Bishop of Oxford to succeed Bishop Stephen when he retires later this year.

God our Shepherd,  
 We give you thanks for Bishop Steven's ministry as our bishop  
 and ask your blessing on him as he prepares to retire.  
 At this time, we ask your blessing also on our diocese and those who have been chosen to shape its future.  
 May they listen to one another, to the voices of your people, and to the voice of your Holy Spirit.  
 May your love be at the heart of all their decisions and your will be done in the appointment of a new bishop.  
 We ask this through your Son, who shared your love in his life among us and showed it in his death for us,  
 Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Please pray for:**

- Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury and Stephen, Archbishop of York;
- Steven (preparing for retirement) and Gavin our bishops in this diocese; for the Crown Nominations Commission;
- His Majesty King Charles, Her Majesty Queen Camilla, and all the royal family;
- the peace of the world;
- the work of Christian Aid;
- (on Rogation Days) God's blessing on the fruits of the earth and on human labour;
- the suffering, especially those who are known to us and who are on our prayer list;
- those recently departed and those whose year's mind falls at this time;
- people living in Virginia Way, Wallace Close, Wellesbourne Close and West Quay.

**Eucharistic Lectionary**

<b>Sunday</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<b>Acts 17.22-31</b>	Ps 66.7-end	<b>1 Peter 3.13-end</b>	<b>John 14.15-21</b>
<b>Monday</b> Rogation Day	Acts 16.11-15	Ps 149.1-5		John 15.26-16.4
<b>Tuesday</b> Rogation Day	Acts 16.23-34	Ps 138		John 16.5-11
<b>Wednesday</b> Rogation Day	Acts 17.15, 22-18.1	Ps 148.1-2, 11-end		John 16.12-15
<b>Thursday</b> Ascension Day	Acts 1.1-11	Ps 47	Ephesians 1.15-end	Luke 24.44-end
<b>Friday</b> Matthias the Apostle	Isaiah 22.15-end	Ps 15	Acts 1.15-end	John 15.9-17
<b>Saturday</b>	Acts 18.22-end	Ps 47.1-2, 7-end		John 16.23-28

**Collect (6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord ...

**Prayer after Communion (6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

**Collect (Ascension Day)**

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we in heart and mind may also ascend and with him continually dwell; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Prayer after Communion (Ascension Day)**

God our Father, you have raised our humanity in Christ and have fed us with the bread of heaven: mercifully grant that, nourished with such spiritual blessings, we may set our hearts in the heavenly places; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Collect (Matthias the Apostle)**

Almighty God, who in the place of the traitor Judas chose your faithful servant Matthias to be of the number of the Twelve: preserve your Church from false apostles and, by the ministry of faithful pastors and teachers, keep us steadfast in your truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord ... Amen.

## **Some On-line Resources for Worship**

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

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

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

*St Michael's Publications page* <https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StMpublications.html>

*Oxford Cathedral:* Livestream events will appear on the cathedral's YouTube channel, see <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqz9I9-LbZJAPGtje0gQbbg>.

*The University Church of St Mary the Virgin (Oxford)* live stream, see <https://www.youtube.com/c/UniversityChurch/featured>

*Community of the Resurrection:* live streaming and recordings of the community's daily round of prayer and praise, see <https://mirfield.org.uk/live-streaming/> and *YouTube* page <https://www.youtube.com/@StreamingAtMirfield>. On Sundays Mass starts around 8.10 am, after Matins at 7.30 am.

*Walsingham* In addition to the daily live-streaming of Shrine Prayers at 6 pm (5pm on Saturdays). the Sunday Mass is live-streamed (usually at 7.30 am, but check the web site). <https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/whatson-2/livestream/>