



available on the CiA website at www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CHURCHES

There may be some changes to how churches operate from 15 June 2020, so please check the church websites

Abbey Baptist Church

All activities are suspended until further notice. There is a streamed service on Sundays on YouTube from 10.30 am for about an hour every week, and then a 'live' follow-up service for about half an hour on Zoom (with a 5-minute break in-between). The streamed service also stands alone where preferred. All details and links needed are at our website www.abbey-baptist-church.org.uk.

Abingdon Baptist Church

All activities at Abingdon Baptist Church and 35 Ock Street are closed until further notice. Sunday worship at 10.30 am is streamed LIVE on both our facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/watch/150064391721929/> - and our YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJC53RxYD8m0v-wNi1a03TA>. Join us live and add comments during the stream so we can see them during the service, especially requests for prayer.

Launch and Dynamite activities for our children and young people are available each week - see <https://www.abingdonbaptist.org.uk/events/familychurchathome/> for details.

There is also an archive of sermons, by topic, book of the Bible, date, series and speaker, available on our website – <https://www.abingdonbaptist.org.uk/sermon-archive/>.

Abingdon Vineyard Church

Abingdon Vineyard Church has suspended all meetings including Sunday mornings, Baby and Toddler Group and Youth Clubs, but we send out a Sunday message via email and our Facebook Community page. It is also now running online services at 10.30 am on Sunday mornings. These can be viewed on the Abingdon Vineyard Church YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgCbfmG5oSIRIshR5q6cb5w>.

Small groups are running online via Zoom. We are also running an Alpha course online. If you would like any information about our groups/emails, please contact us through the contact page on our website - <https://www.abingdonvineyard.org.uk>.

The South Abingdon satellite of the Abingdon Emergency Foodbank continues to be open on Wednesdays between 1 and 2.30 pm.

All Saints Methodist Church

All Saints Methodist Church is closed until further notice for both services and user groups. There will be links to worship materials and notice sheets through the website. A full service will be produced weekly for users to worship at home. In addition, a Circuit Minister will lead a weekly Sunday Service on Zoom.

For resources to help you worship at home, go to:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

or to join services streamed live from Wesley's Chapel in London, Wednesday 12.45 pm, Thursday 12.45 pm, Sundays 9.45 and 11.00 am, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA>

Notice Sheets and Weekly Devotional Material are available on our website at

<http://www.allsaintsabingdon.org.uk/>

Other resources are available on the Wantage and Abingdon Circuit website -

<https://www.wantab.org.uk/> - or YouTube

channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t_ZQt0w.

Christ Church

Christ Church have a livestream service each Sunday at 10.30 am and a Family All-Together video at 4 pm. Details can be found on our websites: <https://cca.uk.net/> and <http://www.longfurlongchurch.org.uk>.

Life groups and networks connect on various days and times during the week via Zoom. For full details, see our websites.

Food Bank continues to be open Tuesday and Friday at Northcourt Road between 11 am and 1 pm. There is a great team of volunteers but food donations are still very much needed – see <https://abingdon.foodbank.org.uk> for details.

Peachcroft Christian Centre

Sunday Worship is available on our YouTube channel -

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_ImikBOKezdRI3lpsmbk6A/.

A playlist is made available by 9.15 am which allows you to watch the service at 10.00 am or at a time that suits you. A families video is available as an alternative to the main talk.

Online small groups meet after the service and midweek for fellowship, Bible study and prayer, using video conferencing. If you would like to join, email secretary@peachcroftcc.org.

Bible verses, music and a variety of other aids to worship and prayer are sent out regularly via our WhatsApp group and Daily Digest email. A weekly email is also sent to families with children with ideas and thoughts, and useful links to articles, videos and advice. To join any of these, please email your mobile number to secretary@peachcroftcc.org.

For more Information go to our website - <http://peachcroftcc.org/>.

Quakers

Abingdon Quakers are holding virtual meetings for worship on the Zoom platform at our normal time: Sundays 10.15 - 11:15 am, followed by virtual coffee and tea. All are welcome. If you would like to join us, please email zoom@abingdonquakers.org.uk for log-in details.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is closed until further notice, including services and activities. All enquiries to Captain Alexandra Devine at abingdon@salvationarmy.org.uk or on 01235 523568.

St Edmund's Roman Catholic Church

From Friday 20 March, the church will be closed to the public for all Masses. Mass times, which can only be viewed on our live streaming, will be as follows:

- ❖ Mondays at 9.00 am
- ❖ Wednesdays at 7.00 pm
- ❖ Thursdays at 9.30 am
- ❖ Fridays at 7.00 pm
- ❖ Saturdays at 9.00 am
- ❖ Sundays at 10.15 am

There is extraordinary demand on live streaming of Masses throughout the world, especially on Sundays. If viewers experience buffering and all of them refresh their screen at the same time, this increases the surge and aggravates the situation. Small things we can do which might help include:

- ❖ Staggering our 'entry' into the live stream on Sundays - so, for example, not all joining in exactly at the time Mass starts.

- ❖ If you experience buffering, try to wait for several seconds before refreshing your screen if it doesn't resolve itself in that short time.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place on Saturdays from 10.30 to 11.30 am.

Live screening can be accessed through the Mass section of St Edmund's website - <https://www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/>.

St Helen's, St Michael's, St Nicolas

All three churches of the Abingdon Parish are closed for public worship.

Live streams from parishes in the Diocese as well as details of talks to be given by Bishops on local radio stations can be reached on the following website:

https://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/diocesan_streamed_eucharist22_03_20DRAFT2.pdf

St Michael's - all services and regular events have been cancelled until further notice. Links to online resources for worship can be found on our website - <https://www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk/>.

St Nicolas - All services and weekly activities are cancelled until further notice. Resources and links are available on our website - <http://www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/> .

St Helen's – We have a web page which is intended to provide support and practical information to the Abingdon Parish congregations (St Helen's, St Michael's, St Nicolas) during the period of church closure. Prayers, readings and sermons will be recorded every week, continuing the normal Sunday pattern. Please check the web page - http://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/Parish/P_resources.html - regularly for updates and new resources. If there are any problems with video playback, please try the Download option, or stream the video from the St Helen's Church YouTube channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UcKAn05eCW9nmZRxo7yen_dA/playlists. The clergy team are also providing a 'thought for the day' on the Abingdon Blog.

Trinity Church

All services and church activities (for example, Evergreen Club, Abingdon Gospel Choir, etc.) are suspended until further notice. Worship material, news sheets and other information are available on the website - <https://trinityabingdon.org.uk>. A full service will be produced weekly for users to worship at home. In addition, a Circuit Minister will lead a weekly Sunday Service on Zoom.

WHAT'S NEW

Sad news

Revd David Fleming's wife Beth passed away on last Tuesday evening 2 June 2020 from complications derived from Covid 19. Please pray for David (previous minister at ABC) and their 4 children at this time as they mourn the loss of their wife and mother.

Church Twinning

Our Eco-Twinning Event was meant to take place this month, with visitors from churches in all five twin towns. To replace the organised reflective walk, we have compiled an 'online virtual prayer walk' around Abingdon and thought that Abingdon friends in lockdown might like to share it.

How to take part: If you are using a Browser (e.g. Internet Explorer, Chrome) the following link will take you to a prayer walk in Abingdon. If you are using an app, use the link to go to "Your places" and "maps". Here is the link: [Abingdon Prayer Walk](#)

TAB

In order to comply with the requirements of the Charity Commissioners, this is a formal notification to inform you that due to the restrictions arising from COVID19, the 2020 AGM of The Abingdon Bridge has been deferred from Tuesday 16 June 2020 until Tuesday 22 September 2020 at 7 pm at The Barn, Christ Church, Northcourt Road, Abingdon OX14 1PL.

Coronavirus and Refugees

One of ABC's deacons (lay leaders in a Baptist context) has raised with us the desperate plight of refugees at this time, as she felt greatly concerned as a result of an interview on BBC2 Newsnight on 1 May.

A medical doctor who had been traumatised by his previous work in Afghanistan spoke urgently and emphatically about the present situation in Sudan, Syria and Refugee camps. The lack of hygiene and sanitation means these areas are prone to imminent danger and loss of life from the Coronavirus. He emphasised the urgent need to avoid catastrophe within weeks and that international action was required to combat this. A statesman-like leader was needed – pressed by the interviewer to name such a leader, this doctor suggested David Milliband might be someone with the reputation and skills to undertake this.

We may agree or disagree with that last suggestion, and Mr Milliband may not be available! – but the really important thing is that as Christians we must never forget that there are multitudes far worse off than we are, especially those in such crowded conditions where social distancing is quite impossible. There may seem little we can do – but as one action the person raising this has written to our MP, and others may wish to follow her example, to ensure that these needs are brought to the attention of those who just may be able to make a difference. Also, we can try to think of ways to let other people in the wider world and in the local community know of our concerns, so that rather than just being hidden in church our faith is seen in action in present day situations wherever there is injustice, poverty or suffering, locally or in other countries. We should "let our light shine"!

And never forget that we can pray!

Abingdon Food Bank

Trussell Trust: We are getting a huge amount of support both locally and nationally for the Abingdon Food Bank, and are so grateful for the contributions from the local churches and greatly appreciate everyone's support at this time. We have seen a huge increase in demand for the Food bank, but the supply has increased dramatically, so we are in an excellent position to give all the support that is needed.

The following link takes you to some information from the Trussell Trust regarding the national food bank situation - www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/church-support - with updated news for churches.

Fundraising: Ock Street Band are a local Abingdon band all of whom have played either previously or play currently with the Peachcroft Christian Centre worship band. They have just released their debut song 'Love of Life' (from their soon to be released EP 'From Scratch') to raise money for the Abingdon Food Bank to help at this particularly demanding time. The song is currently available to stream and download on YouTube and Spotify and can also be bought from Amazon and iTunes (search Ock Street Band). The band is donating all royalties and any donations to the Abingdon Food Bank and have a Just Giving page - <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/ockstreetband>

The song, initially written by Ben Nielsen after his mother died to help his father cope with the loss, has been rewritten by Ben and fellow band member Kay Davies and together with the band they made this recording. They were lucky enough to have Duncan Wymbs play his wonderful lead guitar on the track with them.

Christian Focus: Summer 2020 issue

The bumper summer edition of the Christian Focus magazine is now available on the CiA website - www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk.

NOTE: Due to the current pandemic and lockdown, this issue will not be printed – it will be a purely electronic edition, so please pass it on to colleagues, friends, congregations, and where possible provide printed copies to those who have no access to IT resources.

This edition has several articles about the current lockdown: poems galore and reports on how various groups and churches are dealing with the issues – TAB, 35 Ock Street, Trinity Learning. There are also reports on the World Day of Prayer 2020; Rocha; the 2020 Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature; How Jews/ Christians read The Bible, from a talk by Prof Barton to the Abingdon Progressive Christian Network, as well as the usual puzzles.

Trinity Learning – report from the last project that took place before lockdown

Back before the lockdown began, in March, which now feels a very long time ago, Taz and I went to St Nicolas School to help support a team of six 8/9-year-old (Year 4) children deliver an assembly to the whole school. The children had been trained through a series of TrinityLearning workshops.

The DiY Assembly workshops began with presentations from us on two Bible stories, from which the children chose the Parable of the Mustard Seed, to fit with the assembly theme of patience. Working over six sessions the children first learned the story so they could tell it independently. They then thought about which part of the story referred to patience - and chose the phrase 'after a while'. Thinking about this, and growing seeds, led to watching film clips of seeds growing (much faster than in real life!), from which the children developed a dance of plants slowly emerging from their seeds.

The following week saw the team investigating examples of patience in their own lives by becoming roving reporters, interviewing each other for their patience examples. We talked about active patience - for example, when you have to work hard to learn something difficult - and passive patience - when you just have to wait for something to happen. Interestingly, most of the children's examples seemed to apply a definition of patience as waiting for something while not being annoying to those around you. A valuable insight at the moment!

Finally, the group both applied and illustrated patience by creating short stop-frame movies of a drawing of a seed growing into a tree. Working in two teams, each team had to draw and photograph around 45 images to create around 20 seconds of film.

The final assembly was a credit to the team's hard work throughout the project and hopefully left everyone with some useful thoughts and reflections on patience. Here is an excerpt of the group's closing prayer:

Thank you for being patient.
Help us to be patient more often.
Sorry for when we have not been patient in the past.
Thank you for letting us have patience in our lives.
We will always love you in our hearts.

Amen

TrinityLearning staff are currently furloughed in order to best preserve our grant funding to enable us to support schools at the time we think they will need it the most - on their return to classroom study. We are still monitoring email, phone messages and social media so please do get in touch if you have would like to know more about our work, have some great ideas for us or would just like to say hello!

NEWS FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS

Abingdon Street Pastors

Street Pastors will not be out in the town on Saturday nights until further notice.

Archway

Archway's supportive social groups are not able to meet during the 'lockdown' and our individual support service cannot make face-to-face visits. Instead, we are providing emotional support and contact through telephone calls, electronic and postal communication. For some (who don't have anyone contacting them other than Archway), there are practical issues to address so we are linked in with statutory and community initiatives, drawing on these to assist people with their shopping, prescription deliveries, non-functioning smoke alarms, health concerns, etc. It is a very busy time!

We are helping to promote the feeling of connectedness by sending (mostly by post as the majority of our Archway Friends are not on email) a regular newsletter sharing ideas on how to survive being more confined to home and information on sources of help. Word searches are proving popular and future editions may include quizzes, mindfulness colouring, etc. There is also a knitting initiative, with Friends, staff and volunteers knitting squares to be made into an Archway blanket. Inevitably, some are really struggling with the loneliness and isolation but there are also examples of great resilience and creativity as people tell us they are practising singing or playing an instrument, writing poems, producing beautiful paintings, knitting toys, reading Shakespeare, making model vehicles. We are looking forward to having the opportunity to see and share the fruits of labours undertaken in these unusual times.

Abingdon Progressive Christianity Network

All meetings are suspended until further notice.

Cake and Conversation

This friendly, informal group for those whose first language is not English is continuing to meet virtually through Zoom on Wednesday mornings. For further information, contact Angela Waterhouse on 01235 532296 or Anne Dodd on 01235 525997 or email abingdoncakeandconversation@gmail.com.

Church in Abingdon

The following activities are cancelled:

- ❖ Fun in the Park
- ❖ Governing Body meetings are suspended until further notice

It is hoped that the CiA Annual Bereavement service will be able to take place in November 2020.

Circle Dancing/Moving into Stillness

Our Circle Dancing and Moving into Stillness groups are proving to be a real source of strength and encouragement. Every Thursday at 11 am, we light a candle in our own homes and dance to music from CDs or YouTube, using instructions for steps from our teachers, Mary Williams and Elizabeth Mitchell. We have also been exchanging video clips, prayers and poems that are sustaining us all at this difficult time.

Silent Reflections

Material for Silent Reflections is still being sent out each month for people to use in their own home.

The Abingdon Bridge (TAB)

TAB have completely reconfigured their support services. All our young people were contacted to ask them if they would like to continue to have a link with us remotely via text, phone, email, or social media. We have also invested in smart phones for all the staff so that they can work from home and continue with regular support for their clients. After just three weeks, it is working! We are getting some great feedback from clients and staff!

Our other significant challenge is that earlier this year, we had a massive increase in the number of young people needing our support. This led to a waiting list of 48 – it has never been as long as this. We have been able to respond to this by carrying out initial assessments online and we are beginning to

reduce the waiting list. We are enormously grateful to our centre manager, Gary Hibbins, and all the staff for responding in such a positive way to what is a challenging situation for us all. The trustees are also working hard to support these changes and all planned meetings continue using conference calls very effectively.

Unlike some other charities, we have also been able to reassure the staff that we still need them. This is only possible because of the generous support of our friends.

Finally, a Coronavirus prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, you are powerful and merciful, we ask you to protect us from the spread of the coronavirus.

We remember those living in coronavirus hotspots and those currently in isolation. May they know your presence in their isolation, your peace in their turmoil and your patience in their waiting.

We pray for our leaders: the World Health Organisation, national governments, and local leaders too - heads of schools, hospitals and other institutions. We ask you to grant them wisdom beyond their own wisdom to contain this virus, faith beyond their own faith to fight this fear, and strength beyond their own strength to sustain vital institutions through this time of turmoil.

We pray for those who are grieving, reeling from the sudden loss of loved ones. May they find your fellowship in their suffering, your comfort in their loss, and your hope in their despair. We name before you those known to us who are vulnerable and scared - the frail, the sick and the elderly...

We pray for all medical professionals dealing daily with the intense pressures of this crisis. Grant them resilience in weariness, discernment in diagnosis, and compassion upon compassion as they care. We thank you for the army of researchers working steadily and quietly towards a cure - give them clarity, serendipity and unexpected breakthrough today.

Lord, this is our prayer. Amen

From 24-7 Prayer

The CiA News is circulated by the Church in Abingdon to member churches within Abingdon to promote church activities and groups, news and any other information that may be of interest to CiA news readers. If you would like to submit news or receive the news by email, please contact Debra Mcknight (dhmcknight@aol.com). The deadline for publication is the 15th of the month previous to publication. For more information about the Church in Abingdon, go to www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk.