



TRINITY TRIANGLE



DECEMBER 2025 / JANUARY 2026

Glory to God in the highest

PEACE ON EARTH



'Serving God, serving each other, serving community'

TRINITY CHURCH

Methodist/United Reformed/Church in Abingdon

Conduit Road, Abingdon

TRINITY'S WEEK

Sunday Services at 10.30 am, occasionally in the evening.

Junior Church meets on the first Sunday morning of the month during the Church Service. It is designed for children who are aged 3+ and parents may stay with their children if they wish. Holy Communion is normally celebrated at 10.30 within the morning service as announced in the Calendar.

Monday	2.30 pm Evergreen Club: 3rd Monday in month. 5.30 pm Beavers. 6.45 pm Cubs. 7.30 pm Scouts.
Tuesday	7.30 pm Abingdon Operatic Society.
Wednesday	5.15 pm Brownies. 7.00 pm Guides.
Thursday	9.30 am Toddler Group. 7.30 pm Thursday Group. Ladies' Monthly Meeting 2nd Thursday in the month.
Friday	10.00 am Prayer Support Group (in their homes). 9.30am Coffee 10-10.45am. Abingdon Larder (SOFEA)
Monthly	7.30 pm Friendship Group - see calendar.

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Ministers:

Presbyter: Revd. Georgina Bondzi-Simpson MBE,



December 2025 - January 2026

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*Hark the glad sound! The saviour comes
the saviour promised long;
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.*

(Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751)

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The editors reserve the right to edit articles.

Trinity Website: www.trinityabingdon.org.uk

Minister's Letter

Matthew 2: 1-12

"...they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy." (v9-10)

Long before telescopes and computers, people named the stars and charted their long journeys through the skies. Several references in the Old Testament testify to the extent to which the stars held meaning for the ancient people of God. Job mentions three constellations (9:9); in the Book of Job stars are said to "sing together" and "sing for joy" and Psalm 147 tells us that God names all the stars and determines their number.

After Jesus was born, according to Matthew's account, it is not the local people who first encounter the presence of God-with-us, but rather Magi from the East—foreigners, strangers, and outsiders skilled in interpreting dreams and reading the stars for signs. Many scholars suggest that the Magi were practitioners of a different religion, such as Zoroastrian priests from Persia (modern-day Iran). The connection between the rising star and the birth of a king is not entirely clear, but the star suggests the imagery of light which is often associated with salvation in the Bible.

Whoever the Magi were, their presence assures us that the light of glory has shone beyond Jesus' own country to draw the world to his saving grace. As soon as the learned stargazers turned toward the city of David, the star they had seen in their distant homeland led them to Jesus and Mary. The star, (not unlike the pillar of fire that went before the Israelites through the wilderness – Exodus 13: 21) indicates that the Messiah has arrived. It also symbolises God's light shining into a dark world as John 1:9 describes: Jesus, "the true light that gives light to everyone."

The Magi's journey from the East to Bethlehem is known to have taken several months or even years. With no Google maps, Waze

or other GPS system, the Magi relied on the star leading and them following - a metaphor for divine guidance. Interestingly, in contrast to the Magi, the local scholars and the scribes and chief priests, who were also learned and knew the Scriptures, did not recognise any of the signs from God that appeared around them until Herod inquired. I wonder what hindered their ability to see the star. What hinders ours?

Like the Magi, we also carry on our journeying through Advent, Christmas and the rest of 2025; and we will continue that journey with the Magi as we cross the threshold of this year into 2026. Just as the Magi trusted the star, we are also reminded to continue to trust God's leading, even when the path is unclear or challenging and even when the Herods of this world put obstacles in our way. Like all other New Years, we will not know what 2026 holds. Like the Magi who were successfully led to the Christ-Child by solely relying on the star, I pray that our journeys, individual and communal, will be marked by persistence, faith and readiness to be led by Jesus, our Light and salvation, the Light of the World.

When the star stopped over the place where Jesus was, the Magi were overwhelmed with joy and worshipped Jesus.

May you be filled to overflowing with the joy, peace and love of the Christ-Child, this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Every blessing,

Georgina



CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Our best wishes to Bobbie Tyler, one of the Evergreen team of helpers, who suffered an arm injury in a car accident after the November meeting. It was lovely to see Ruth Dams, following her accident, in church again and at the Church Meeting recently.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Lindsay waiting for a delayed operation and with all those who have been unwell recently or have been unable to come to church.

We look forward to the Advent and Christmas services in the church and thank all those who are taking part in these, especially Georgina who is taking Trinity's three Christmas services during that week.

Our best wishes to everyone and to their families for a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

"In You, Father, we are one family in earth and heaven"

Heavenly Father, as we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace, we pray for peace on earth. May the message of peace that the angels proclaimed on the first Christmas resonate in every heart and home. We ask that you bring healing to a world filled with conflict and division.

Christmas Day Lunch 2025

Once again, Peachcroft Christian Centre are offering a Christmas Day lunch for people who are going to be alone this Christmas, but who would like to celebrate in the company of others. Transport can be provided for those unable to make their own way. The lunch is always a joyous occasion, enjoyed by guests and volunteers alike. If you know of anyone who might benefit from joining us as a guest this year, please get in touch with Fiona on 07503 178893 or at christmaslunch25@peachcroftcc.org.

An Advent Winter Warmer Lunch: Sunday 7th December

On Sunday 7th December, an Advent Winter Warmer Lunch will be served at 12.15pm in the Conduit Centre.

Please sign the form in the Welcome Area and select your option if you would like to attend.

There will be a donation pot available at the lunch for donations to the Trinity charity for this year, 'Reducing the Risk'. This local charity aims to increase the safety and wellbeing of adults and children at risk through domestic abuse and to protect people who are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Judith Fear

Advent - a Joint Study Group

Advent is a time of waiting and preparation – waiting for the birth of Jesus and preparing ourselves for his coming. This year there will be an

Advent Bible study for All Saints and Trinity led by Revd Carol Foyn, held on Friday afternoons from 2.00-3.30pm in the Perry Room at All Saints.

Friday November 28th – Light in the Darkness – the People of God

Friday December 5th – Trust in the Promises – the Prophets

Friday December 12th – Hope in the Wilderness – John the Baptist

Friday December 19th – Joy in the Unexpected – Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Each one stands alone so don't worry if you cannot make all of them – just come when you can.

Advent Labyrinth Walks:

St Michael and All Angels will be open on Tuesday 2nd, 9th and 16th December between 11 am and 12 noon. There will be an opportunity to walk the labyrinth or simply enjoy the sacred space. Material for reflection will be available on a different Advent theme each week. A short prayer will be said at the beginning and end of each session, but feel free to come and go as you please. Parking permits are available from St Michael's.

**Saturday 13th December
10am - 11am
CiA Christmas Carol Singing in the
Market Square**



Come and join in on Saturday 13th December 2025 in the Market Place, from 10am to 11am, as people from the local churches sing Christmas carols together to the people of Abingdon. All musicians welcome – please contact Debra Mcknight, the CiA Administrator, for details of carols and keys. The aim is not to collect money, but to distribute leaflets about all the local Christmas Church services. Sally Mears has kindly agreed to be our wonderful conductor yet again. And there will be chairs for those who would prefer to be off their feet. Bring along your Christmas hats and bells to this special celebration of Christmas! Children's craft activities and face painting are also available. Abingdon Street Pastors will be joining us after the carol singing to offer us hot pasties and drinks.

Trinity Evergreen Club - Monday 15th December

This year we are calling our celebrations Stephanie's Christmas Party. Stephanie was a member of our Club, who wished that all the contributions at her funeral should come to The Evergreen Club "For a Damn Good Party"!!

So that is what the Committee are trying to organise. For this year our members will enjoy their party for free.

We start at the earlier time of 2.00pm for our entertainment and Tea - and as usual we round off the afternoon with Carols, finishing at 4.00pm.



Trinity Evergreen Club - Monday 19th January 2026

We start the New Year's Programme with a Games Afternoon. We begin at the usual time of 2.30pm and there will be refreshments and a raffle.



Christmas Greetings

2025

Wishing all our friends at Trinity a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year, with blessings and love, Ken and Lin.

Tom and Sue Kyffin wish everyone at Trinity a very happy Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful 2026.

Doreen and Brian send loving greetings to dear friends at Trinity and wish them all a peaceful and blessed Christmastime and very good wishes for the New Year.

Just wishing all my church family a happy Christmas and New Year. I shall be giving a donation to charity this year. Lindsay and David

Neil and Elizabeth want to wish all their Trinity friends a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year. Instead of sending Christmas cards, they will be making a donation to SOFEA.

Eve and Malcolm send warmest Christmas Greetings to everyone at Trinity; and instead of cards will be making a donation to 'Reducing the Risk.'

Rosemary and John Richards send all our friends at Trinity our Best Wishes for an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Val and Paul Dalby send Christmas greetings and their best wishes for a healthy, peaceful and happy New Year.

'Our Christmas greetings and best wishes for the season to all at Trinity.'
Leif and Petronella

Barbara Deakin sends her hopes and prayers for a blessed peaceful Christmas and New Year to her Trinity family. Instead of sending Christmas cards I will be donating to Crisis.

Clare, Huw and David send love and greetings to the Trinity family. May the peace and joy of Christmas time be with you now and in the coming year.

'Christmas Blessings to all my friends at Trinity. I will be making a donation to charity instead of sending cards. Best wishes', Ray Chadwick,

Andy, Fiona, and Kathryn extend their warmest wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year to everyone. This year, instead of sending out Christmas cards, we will be contributing to the work of the Abingdon Compassionate Café.

Ernest and Nan Draper send our love, with Christmas Greetings and best wishes for the New Year to all at Trinity.



DECEMBER



Sun 7th	10.30am 12.15pm	Morning Worship led by Georgina Advent Winter Warmer Lunch
Mon 8th	5.30pm	Beavers, 6.45pm Cubs, 7.30pm Scouts
Wed 10th	5.15pm	Brownies, 7.00pm Guides
Thurs 11th	7.00pm	Thursday Group: Christmas Party
Fri 12th	10.30am 9.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group Coffee 10.00 – 10.45am SOFEA Larder
Sat 13th	10.00am	Carol Singing in the Market Place, Abingdon (see p8)
Sun 14th	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd. Carol Hamilton-Foy
Mon 15th	2.00pm 5.30pm	Evergreen: Stephanie's Christmas Party Beavers, 6.45pm Cubs, 7.30pm Scouts
Fri 19th	10.30am 9.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group Coffee 10.00am – 10.45am SOFEA Larder
Sun 21st		NO MORNING SERVICE 4.30pm Carol Service led by Georgina
Wed 24th	4.00pm	Christingle service led by Georgina
Thurs 25th	10am	CHRISTMAS MORNING Service led by Georgina NO SOFEA THIS WEEK Sun 28th
10.30am		Morning Worship led by Revd. Pauline Main



Fri 2nd	10.30am 9.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group Coffee 10.00 – 10.45am SOFEA Larder
Sun 4th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Communion led by Georgina (Covenant Service)
Thurs 8th	2.30pm	The Thursday Group: AGM Conduit Centre

Fri 9th	10.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group
	9.30am	Coffee 10.00am – 10.45am SOFEA Larder
Sat 10th	2pm	The Induction of Revd Wayne Hawkins as Oxfordshire Ecumenical Minister, at Trinity.
Sun 11th	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Daphne Savage
Mon 12th	5.30pm	Beavers, 6.45pm Cubs, 7.30pm Scouts
Wed 14th	5.15pm	Brownies, 7.00pm Guides
Thurs 15th	9.30am	Trinity Toddler Group
Fri 16th	10.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group
	9.30am	Coffee 10.00 – 10.45am SOFEA Larder
Sun 18th	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd. John Anderson
Mon 19th	2.30pm	Evergreen: Games Afternoon
	5.30pm	Beavers, 6.45pm Cubs, 7.30pm Scouts
Wed 21st	5.15pm	Brownies, 7.00pm Guides
Thurs 22nd	9.30am	Trinity Toddler Group
Fri 23rd	10.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group
	9.30am	Coffee 10.00am – 10.45am SOFEA Larder
		Deadline for February issue of Triangle
Sun 25th	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd. Pauline Main
Mon 26th	5.30pm	Beavers, 6.45pm Cubs, 7.30pm Scouts
Wed 28th	5.15pm	Brownies, 7.00pm Guides
Thurs 29th	9.30am	Trinity Toddler Group
Fri 30th	10.30am	Virtual Prayer Support Group
	9.30am	Coffee 10.00am – 10.45am SOFEA Larder

February 2026

Sun 1st 10.30am Morning Worship with Communion led by Georgina

**Deadline for February issue of Triangle
Friday 23rd January**

**Please send contributions to Cynthia (cynbartlett@yahoo.co.uk)
AND to Val (vadalby17@gmail.com) or via the Office**



Tidings of Great Joy



Cradled in a manger, meanly
laid the Son of Man his head;
sleeping his first earthly slumber
where the oxen had been fed.
Happy were those shepherds listening
to the holy angel's word;
happy they within that stable,
worshipping their infant Lord.
Happy all who hear the message
of his coming from above;
happier still who hail his coming,
and with praises greet his love.
Blessed saviour, Christ most holy,
in a manger thou didst rest;
canst thou stoop again, yet lower,
and abide within my breast?
Evil things are there before thee;
in the heart, where they have fed,
wilt thou pitifully enter,
Son of man, and lay thy head?
Enter, then, O Christ most holy;
make a Christmas in my heart;
make a heaven of my manger:
It is heaven where thou art.
And to those who never listened
to the message of thy birth,
who have winter, but no Christmas
bringing them thy peace on earth.
send to these the joyful tidings;
by all people, in each home,
be there heard the Christmas anthem:
praise to God, the Christ has come!

George Stringer Rowe (1830-1913)

Jesus, the Light of the World

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock:

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev 3:20).

This beautiful painting by William Holman Hunt was painted in 1853 and exhibited in the Royal Academy the following year. It was bequeathed to Keble College, Oxford and may be seen in the side chapel.

On the left of the painting is seen the barred door of the human soul, the rusty nails indicating it has never been opened. Christ wears the white robe representing the power of the spirit. His crown of gold is inwoven with the crown of thorns. The thorns are not dead, but bear leaves, for the healing of the nations.



The lantern in Christ's left hand is the light of conscience, which displays past sin. Its light falls only on the closed door and the weeds around it. The light of Christ (indicated by his halo) is the light of peace and the hope of salvation.

The later replica painting in St Paul's Cathedral is larger, but lacks the detail and colours of the Keble College painting.



REMEMBRANCE

The sermon given by Revd Alan Grist on Remembrance Sunday 2025:

At the heart of the Christian Faith is a God who gives his all for the world, expressed as God crucified in his Son Jesus Christ.

Summed up in the phrase, **“Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”** (John 15:13)

It was the crucifixion story that changed the life of a young Japanese boy called Toyohiko Kagawa (1888-1960). Kagawa was brought up in a Shinto religious family but his father decided to send him to a Christian Missionary school. Part of his education at this school was to study the Bible. During one class when they were studying the gospel story of the life of Jesus they came to his crucifixion. The teacher looked up and he noticed that Toyohiko was crying. “Why are you crying, Kagawa?” the teacher asked, to which Kagawa replied, “I can’t understand why they would want to put such a good man to death”. The teacher went on to say that was not the end of the story but there was resurrection and new life. That night Toyohiko knelt by his bedside and prayed his first Christian prayer, “God, make me like Jesus.”

Kagawa went on to university and became an academic. He chose to live in a slum area called Shinkawa where he shared his house with deprived and needy people.

He opposed Japan going to war, and was frequently imprisoned for his protests. At the end of the war the Prime Minister of Japan, Prince Higoshikumi, said to Kagawa, “Dr.Kagawa, Japan has been destroyed, not because we had not a sufficient army, but because we had suffered the loss of a good standard of morality and engaged in war. We need a new standard of ethics, like that of Jesus Christ. Buddhism can never teach us to forgive our enemies; nor can Shintoism. Only Jesus Christ was able to love his enemies. Therefore, Dr. Kagawa, if Japan is to be revived we need Jesus Christ as the basis for our national life. I want you to help me put the love of Christ into the hearts of our people.” (“Kagawa of Japan” by Cyril Davey). In 1946 Kagawa was invited to take a seat in the Government. He refused, saying “I cannot do this. I must give my time to preaching. My father was a politician, but in my youth I promised God that I would preach the story of the Cross. I can only listen to his inner voice.” (Cyril Davey).

Self-sacrifice comes in many forms. Today we remember those who gave and continue to give themselves for the protection of freedom and for the building of peaceful communities.

In our remembrance we do not glorify war but deplore it.

Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy (1883-1929) was a CofE army chaplain during the first World War. He was deeply affected by the carnage and slaughter of many young lives. His poems reflect this:

WASTE

Waste of Muscle, waste of Brain,
Waste of Patience, waste of Pain,
Waste of Manhood, waste of Health,
Waste of Beauty, waste of Wealth,
Waste of Blood, and waste of Tears,
Waste of Youth's most precious years,
Waste of ways the Saints have trod,
Waste of Glory, waste of God –
War!

(The Unutterable Beauty, G.A.Studdert-Kennedy)

At this stage in our human development you would have thought that we would have realised that war creates more problems than it solves. Politicians and leaders of nations along with all humanity would do well to take to heart the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:43-48. "You have heard that they were told, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But what I tell you is this: love your enemies and pray for your persecutors; only then can you be children of your heavenly Father, who causes the sun to rise on good and bad alike, and sends rain on the innocent and the wicked ... There must be no limit to your goodness, as your heavenly Father's goodness knows no bounds."

Religious people need to take these words to heart. Religion is often depicted as a cause of conflict and war- and we must admit that there is some truth in this. Proponents of religious conflict are the people who distort the teaching of their religion. If we are to build peace then the major religions need to unite in opposing terrorism and the easy resort to war.

A while ago Muslim world leaders wrote a letter to the leaders of the Christian Churches urging a deeper understanding of each other and working together for peace. It seems a step in the right direction.

The best way we can honour the sacrifice of those who gave their lives for our freedom and peace is to seek justice and peace for all people. Each of us can contribute to this in the communities in which we live.

Revd. Alan Grist.



Christmas Planning at TrinityLearning.

Not unlike Santa Claus, we are currently making lists - and checking them twice - to ensure we have all the many resources needed to deliver the Trinity Kingfisher Christmas Service to nine groups from Kingfisher School.

Two groups of pupils will come to Trinity Church to take part in short services sharing the Nativity Story with props such as a donkey puppet, chamomile-scented hay and gold stars. Each child coming to the church receives a little packet of resources and a song sheet to use during the service and take home if they wish to retell the story. The other seven groups will



take part in short services in school, led by TrinityLearning volunteers and staff. Large resources such as fleece blankets and big feathers are available for children who have limited manual dexterity. This enables us to tweak the service for each group ensuring all the children can take part and enjoy the story.

The Kingfisher School services in Trinity Church start a very busy fortnight in the church with eight different performances including Carol Concerts, Nativity Plays and a St Nicolas

celebration. Many of these are supported by TrinityLearning in addition to Eluned and volunteers from Trinity Church.

TrinityLearning AGM is taking part via Zoom on the 20th January from 6:00pm - 7:30pm. We welcome everyone interested in TrinityLearning's work. Please email



Nicola on nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com for a Zoom link and a copy of our Annual Report which we will be sending out to all our volunteers and supporters.



Calling knitters and crocheters -

As many of you know TrinityLearning gives out a tiny handmade teddy with each Bereavement Pack provided to support a recently bereaved child. Last school year we gave out seventeen bears and so we are looking to restock. If you are able to knit or crochet please could you consider making a tiny bear? We provide everything you need. If you are interested in helping

with this please email Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.

Volunteers Opportunities- Experience Easter!

It seems strange to be talking about Easter in December but we are starting to plan for Experience Easter 2026, which will offer schools the choice to visit Trinity Church for live workshops or to take part online. Experience Easter is a series of reflective workshops, specially developed to allow Key Stage 2 children (7 to 11-year-olds) to access the Easter Story in a meaningful way. It is also an introduction to mindfulness, using stilling exercises and simple activities to allow the children to consider their emotions. We are looking for volunteers to help prepare simple craft packs as well as storytellers to help with the fully scripted live Experience Easter which will be held in Trinity Church. TrinityLearning is committed to Safeguarding. All our volunteer opportunities are subject to safer recruitment procedures. If you would like to help please email Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026 -
“One Body, One Spirit”
18th–25th January 2026

Our Scriptural theme for 2026 (Ephesians 4:4) reminds us that the call to unity is a call to work for peace for all people everywhere. It is a call that goes to the heart of the mission and ministry of the Armenian Church, throughout its history and today, and it is a vital part of the experience that Armenian Christians bring to the global work of Christian unity. In the major international ecumenical gatherings of recent years, the Armenian Church has brought a heartfelt appeal for a stronger collective voice of the Church as an advocate for a just peace in the world, not only for Armenians, but for all those suffering as a result of violence, displacement and persecution. With the Armenian diaspora numbering many times the population of the country itself, the Armenian Church brings together a truly global community that is present in Russia and in Ukraine, and throughout the Middle East. The Armenian community is impacted by these conflicts that have captured the attention of the world, while also experiencing the pain of the comparative neglect of the situation of the Armenian people attacked and displaced by Azerbaijan. The ethnic cleansing and associated human rights abuses perpetrated against the Armenian people, especially in the ancient Armenian homeland of Artsakh, have been well documented by international human rights observers, yet the international community fails to act as lives are lost, families are displaced, people are unjustly imprisoned and cultural heritage is destroyed.

For Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and the National Ecumenical Instruments on these islands, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and Ireland has provided a powerful witness to the call to be peacemakers – through prayer, through advocacy and humanitarian aid, through peace education, and through hospitality and encounter. This goes hand in hand with a deeply rooted commitment to Christian unity as integral to how we live out Christ’s commandment to love our neighbour, and as a source of hope in troubled times. This Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, let us unite in prayer and advocacy for the people of Armenia and Artsakh, calling for an end to violence and the restoration of peace. Together, we can shine a light on these injustices and, in doing so, help build a future where the rights of all are upheld and respected.

Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Dr Nicola Brady, General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Heavenly Realms

LAMPS Collective are returning with their brand new Christmas show offering festive fun for all the family from age 8 – 800 on: Saturday 20th December 2025: 3pm and 7pm, at Peachcroft Christian Centre.

Join the OAPs (Old Angel Pensioners), from the retirement home Heavenly Realms, as they get ready to celebrate Christmas and share memories of the very first one. Hold on to your halo and enjoy a 'holy' new take on the Nativity story!

Tickets: £10 adult: £5 Child/young person (8-18).

Ticket link: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/peachcroft-christian-centre/heavenly-realms/e-gpygml>

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