



**PARISHIONERS' NEWSLETTER**  
**JUNE–AUGUST 2025**



*Roses in Lime Walk and the Memorial Garden – Brigid*

**[www.allsaintsheadington.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsheadington.org.uk)**

## Who's Who at All Saints

<b>Minister</b> Rev. Paul Niemiec <a href="mailto:minister@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">minister@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a>	<b>Director of Music and Organist</b> Stuart Donaldson <a href="mailto:organist@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">organist@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a>
<b>Churchwardens</b> James Larminie <a href="mailto:churchwarden2@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">churchwarden2@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a> Janet Marx <a href="mailto:churchwarden1@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">churchwarden1@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a>	<b>Assistant Organist</b> Keith Waters <b>Choir Administrator</b> Vivienne Larminie <b>Editors: Parish Newsletter</b> Catherine Hodgkinson and Catherine Hodgkinson <a href="mailto:newsletter@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">newsletter@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a>
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<b>Safeguarding Officer</b> Emma Steane <a href="mailto:safeguarding@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">safeguarding@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a>	<b>Social Committee Chair</b> Christine Tucker
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b> John Glasson	<b>Children's Team</b> Catherine Donaldson Andrew Steane Emma Steane
<b>Hon. Secretary PCC</b> Vivienne Larminie <a href="mailto:pcc.secretary@allsaintsheadington.org.uk">pcc.secretary@allsaintsheadington.org.uk</a>	<b>Welcome Team</b> Valerie Boulter Veronica John Susan Newey Lucy Whitworth John Whitworth Alison Kempson William Marx Hamid Delrouz
<b>Hon. Sacristan and Flower Coordinator</b> Valerie Boulter	
<b>Garden</b> Brigid Crofton Valerie Boulter John Macaulay	

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## A Message from Paul

Big Truth!

From Enid Blyton to Arnold Schwarzenegger, Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, fairy stories to cops and robbers, in films, TV, books, radio and podcasts the eternal battle between good and evil pervades our lives. From murder and violence to the big bad wolf and back again we are fascinated onlookers.

The truth is that we acknowledge and engage in these fictions and in doing so often miss the fact that the battles are real and happening in and around us every day, wherever and whoever we are.

I'm sick to death of not only the huge, international evils but also those evils that affect me and you every day. In C.S Lewis's wonderful book *The Screwtape Letters* he outlines some such evils of his time and I've added a few more modern examples:

Bullying, coercion, gossip, undermining, lies, misrepresentation, scams ... oh the list goes on and on

Lewis pinpoints that these evils emanate from a power counter to God and that often it's the small evils that ruin people's lives. I've certainly seen that in a huge number of people over the years.

Jesus came to show us and give us another way, a far better way and the help of The Holy Spirit in the battle. The Bible calls it SPIRITUAL WARFARE and it can be seen in action throughout the pages of our bible, just like life itself.

So, what should we do? As with the fiction, so with the facts: acknowledge, then ask God's help in a loving but firm way to defeat the evil. It has to start with us, as the old hymn reminds us ... that's to say, we need to change and be changed and then we can assist and enable others to change as we all acknowledge the we have the victory in Christ and we, as it says in the Baptism service: TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND TURN TO CHRIST.

Amen

**Paul**

## Our Worship in August and September

Time	Service	Date	Sunday	Celebrant/Preacher
10:00 am	Holy Communion	3 Aug.	Trinity 7	Paul Niemiec /James Larminie
10:00 am	Holy Communion	10 Aug.	Trinity 8	Paul Niemiec
10:00 am	Morning Prayer	17 Aug.	Trinity 9	James Larminie / Christine Tucker
10:00 am	Holy Communion	24 Aug.	Feast of St Bartholomew	Revd Ginny Thomas
10:00 am	Holy Communion	31 Aug.	Trinity 11	Paul Niemiec
10.00 am	Holy Communion	7 Sept.	Trinity 12	Paul Niemiec / Christians against Poverty
10.00 am	Holy Communion	14 Sept.	Trinity 13	Paul Niemiec
10.00 am	Holy Communion	21 Sept.	Feast of St Matthew	Paul Niemiec
10.00 am	Holy Communion	28 Sept.	Trinity 15	Paul Niemiec / Bin Xia
5.30 pm	Choral Evensong	28 Sept.		James Larminie

Tuesdays **8.30am**, Book of Common Prayer Morning Prayer, in the Lady Chapel

Wednesday morning informal services for prayer will not take place in August but will resume in September, also at **8:30 am** in the Lady Chapel.

*James*

**Coming up at All Saints, Highfield**  
**Special services and concerts, for the remainder of 2025**

10:00am: Every Sunday Holy Communion

**Starting in September**

Monthly Prayer Meeting

The Bible Course over 8 weeks tbc, subject to numbers signing up

**Other events**

7 September – Guest Preacher: Christians Against Poverty

20 September – Church and Highfield Residents Afternoon Tea 4.00-5.00 pm

28 September – Choral Evensong

5 October – Harvest Festival

26 October – Choral Evensong

2 November – All Saints Day and Gift Day and Feast

9 November – Remembrance Sunday

15 November – OXUS String Quartet Concert

28 November – Headington Singers

30 November – Advent Sunday, and (5.30 pm) Advent Carols

9 December – Oxford Brooks University, Christian Union Carol Service

21 December – Carol Service, Nine Lessons and Carols (5.30 pm)

24 December – Christingle and 7:30 pm Communion

25 December – 10:00 am Christmas Day Service

*Paul*

**Baptism**

Many of us associate Baptism with small children, but anyone who has not been baptised before can be. Might I be talking to YOU? I have had the honour of baptising people of all ages as they choose to take this ‘Next step with God’ as part of their life journey. Do, please have a chat with me if you think that that is something you may wish to consider doing.

God bless,

*Paul*



## Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)



The annual parochial church meeting took place on Sunday 18 May, and in a departure from tradition it was held after the morning service instead of in the afternoon. It was agreed that this was a good innovation.

The PCC members are the same as last year, the three retiring members having been re-elected. **The PCC constitutes:**

Rev. Paul Niemiec (priest-in-charge and chair)

James Larminie and Janet Marx, churchwardens

Valerie Boulter, Catherine Donaldson, John Glasson (treasurer), Vivienne Larminie (deanery synod representative and secretary), John Macaulay, William Marx (deanery synod representative), Amith Ninan, Andrew Steane, Emma Steane (safeguarding officer), Christine Tucker, Bin Xia.

## Report on the PCC meeting on Tuesday 10 June

Our most important business this time was to review documents relating to Safeguarding at All Saints, previously updated in 2022. The *Parish Safeguarding Policy* was agreed with no changes; the *Procedure for Dealing with Safeguarding Allegations or Concerns* was agreed with a couple of minor changes; both are now displayed on the noticeboard at the back of church and on our website. Additionally, we discussed a draft spreadsheet, *Church Activities June 2025*, which lists the many and various activities which take place in church, at Church House, and outside the church estate but in the name of All Saints. Most of those responsible for individual activities (and all responsible for those in the church building itself) are already known to have been DBS-checked; the application of Safeguarding principles to Church House activities is being investigated, although it is already established that user groups such as judo, Guides and the Seventh Day Adventists deploy them conscientiously.

We also discussed how we might deploy our financial resources to support the hard work of volunteers in such areas as children's and youth work, site management, administration, and IT. This will need further consideration. In other business, a review of income and expenditure in the first six months (nearly) of the year against the draft budget for 2025 showed that overall we are on course as anticipated. It was noted that our new status as a registered charity brings several benefits and also that there is a varied programme of activities in prospect taking place in the church over the summer, including choral evensong (29 June), 'Psalm Roar' (August), and five concerts. As usual, the minutes of the previous meeting (on 11 March) were approved and are available for consultation in a dedicated folder towards the back of church.

***Vivienne***



## Archdeacon's Visit

We were pleased to welcome Archdeacon Jonathan Chaffey as our celebrant and preacher on 11 May. Jonathan stayed after the service and chatted to members of the congregation.



## New Addition to the Welcome Team



We are delighted to say that Hamid Delrouz has volunteered to join the welcome team.

It is important that those who come to church, whether regular worshippers or visitors, are greeted with a friendly smile and made to feel welcome. If you could join our team, even for one Sunday a month, please have a word with Janet.

## Social Committee



On the first Wednesday of each month friends of All Saints meet at the Britannia Inn in Headington for lunch and a chat. No booking required. This has become a very popular occasion with about fourteen people present last time.

The next lunch will be on 3 September at 12.15pm at the Britannia. Everyone welcome.

*Susan*

## Headington Festival and All Saints Open Afternoon

On Sunday 1 June a number of members of the congregation of All Saints helped to staff the stall at the Headington Festival to greet visitors, talk about the church and what we do, and invite children to make music with rice and plastic tubes and tubs. It was a great opportunity to engage with the local community, and thanks to all who volunteered.

The following Saturday we held an open afternoon in church, Despite the dreadful weather, we had around 35 visitors. Members of the congregation conducted guided tours, served tea and cake, and entertained the children. Again, our thanks are due to those who helped.



## **Oxfordshire Historic Trust, Annual Ride and Stride**

**13<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

Do you enjoy cycling or walking? Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, an organisation that makes grants to churches across the county for everything from essential repairs to projects to make your local church a building that can be of use to the whole community by installing a loo and kitchen for example, invites you to join in our Ride & Stride Event on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2025. The event is organised by the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust and your sponsorship money will be shared between the Trust and All Saints'. Since 1964 The Trust has raised over £3.5 million.

This is a sponsored bike ride or walk in which members of All Saints' join people from all over the county to cycle or walk around the city, or nearby towns and villages. The idea is to visit as many churches as possible in the day between 10am and 6pm, and be sponsored for each one. There are more than 550 eligible churches and chapels in Oxfordshire to choose from.

We do hope you will join in this year's Ride and Stride event. If you would like to cycle or walk we will have a list to sign at the back of the church and you will be able to pick up a sponsor form. If you have not done this before and would like to give it a try this year, have a word with James Larminie, John Glasson or myself; we have done it many times.

If you would like to sit in church for an hour or two to welcome visiting cyclists please put your name on the list at the back of the Church. The Church will be open for visitors to sign in and get refreshments from 10am to 6pm. Please sponsor our riders on this year's Ride and Stride.

Like to find out more? Take a look at the website – [www.ohct.org.uk](http://www.ohct.org.uk) or see Carol Glasson in church or contact by email on [carolglasson@btinternet.com](mailto:carolglasson@btinternet.com) or phone 07817911013.

***Thank you, Carol Glasson***

## Music at All Saints

We have had a busy few musical weeks at All Saints. On Saturday 21 June OXUS String Quartet delighted us with a programme entitled 'Revolution'. On 4 July we welcomed sisters Florence and Alice Bolton, playing flute and cello, in a concert to raise money for local charities. 12 July saw the return of Headington Chamber Orchestra for their first anniversary concert. Headington Singers were back on 18 July and the following day All Saints was the venue for a concert by Abingdon Strings. On 2 August the church was packed for a 'Psalm Roar' event, while on 9 August we hosted Trio Farben, featuring viola, harp, flute and soprano.

*Janet and Vivienne*

## Our Final May Wedding



We had the final wedding in our series of three spring weddings on 17 May. This was the marriage of Shervan Chan and Ivy Au from the Oxford Chinese Christian Church. They live in London now but met while at Oxford Brookes University doing postgraduate courses in Architecture.





The wedding included a number of Chinese wedding customs, such as a Tea Ceremony in the Lady Chapel during the morning before the wedding. Also, the groom, in traditional Chinese red robe, and the groomsmen, gathered in Lime Walk, and then the groomsmen went to the church porch, and the groom had to ‘fight’ his way into the church to show he was man enough to claim the bride!! Note, this was earlier in the day and was not just before the service.



It was a very happy day. There was also a bit of a party in the church after the service, before they went off to Headington Hill Hall for the main dinner.

For the last fifteen years or so we have had one wedding every couple of years, so to have three in one year, and one last year, is great. However, as they usually take a long time to plan, that might be it for this year.

*James*

## **From a Wedding to a Golden Wedding**

On Saturday 26 July Vivienne and James Larminie celebrated fifty years of marriage. At the end of the service the following day Paul presented them with a card signed by members of the congregation who offered their congratulations in the form of a sustained round of applause. Over coffee and cake Paul made a further presentation on behalf of All Saints to Vivienne and James – a golden anniversary rose for their garden.

Congratulations to the happy couple.



*Janet*



## ‘Drop, drop slow tears’: four hundred years of Orlando Gibbons

This June saw the four-hundredth anniversary of the death of composer and organist Orlando Gibbons, whose settings are proposed no fewer than 13 times in our *Common Praise* hymnbook. While this does not put him on a level with the likes of J. S. Bach or Ralph Vaughan Williams, his name occurs more frequently than such renowned sacred composers as Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Yet, partly because some of the hymns in question are rarely sung, and partly because much about his life is unknown, he is below the radar of many people. However, the emotive power of the handful of hymns that surface regularly indicates that he deserves further attention.

Gibbons was born in Oxford in 1583, and baptised on 25 December at St Martin, Carfax, the church of which only the tower now survives. It had a particular association with the city corporation; councillors processed there from the town hall in St Aldates on special occasions, just as the (rival) university authorities processed (before the building of the Sheldonian Theatre) to the University Church. Orlando’s father, William Gibbons, was at that time an employee of the corporation, serving as a member of the ‘waits’ or city musicians who would accompany such ceremonial – an ensemble that has been reincarnated successfully in recent decades (see <https://www.oxfordwaits.com/> for background). Orlando received his musical education under his eldest brother Edward, master of the choristers at King’s College, Cambridge, before becoming a student there.

By May 1603, when he signed a contract with the new Scottish king James VI and I, Orlando was a musician of the Chapel Royal. He remained in royal service for the rest of James’s reign and his own life, carving a successful career at court. With his wife Elizabeth, daughter of a



Chapel Royal gentleman, whom he married in 1606, he soon set up home in what is now Bridge Street in Parliament’s parish of St Margaret, Westminster. An area inhabited by many court musicians and servants, it was convenient for the palace

of Whitehall. From there Gibbons wrote settings of Prayer Book services and instrumental and choral pieces to mark major events and honour aristocratic patrons – among them the pavan and galliard ‘Lord Salisbury’, dedicated to the king’s chief minister, Robert Cecil, first earl of Salisbury, and ‘Great king of gods’ for James’s only visit back to Scotland in 1617. When the future Charles I succeeded his deceased elder brother as prince of Wales, Gibbons became one of 17 musicians who regularly attended him, receiving a generous salary of £40 a year. Later, he was promoted to be a member of the prince’s privy chamber, and in 1622 added to his responsibilities as an organist and player of the virginals in the royal households, those of joint organist and master of the chorists at Westminster Abbey.

In March 1625, Gibbons was the senior organist at the funeral of King James. Two months later, on 31 May, as members of the Chapel Royal set out to accompany the royal court to Canterbury to greet the arrival from Paris of



Henrietta Maria of France, newly married by proxy to Charles I, Gibbons was suddenly taken ill. He died in Canterbury on 5 June and was buried in the cathedral the next day. Royal physicians who had been sent to attend him initially feared that he had been suffering from the plague, but a *post mortem* revealed a brain haemorrhage, possibly having its origins in a violent attack on him five years earlier by a deranged member of the royal household. Elizabeth Gibbons arranged for the installation in Canterbury Cathedral of a memorial plaque and bust by the renowned sculptor Nicholas Stone, but herself died in 1626. Since Orlando died intestate and Elizabeth’s will has been lost, vital details of the family are missing.

Gibbons’s music lived on, however. Both his secular and his sacred music remained popular at the royal court and featured in published collections. Viol consorts in Oxford played his pieces after the Restoration and local antiquary Anthony Wood pronounced him ‘one of the rarest musicians and organists of his time’ [quoted in *Oxford DNB* entry: see below]. Later in the seventeenth century, his music influenced Henry Purcell and also Henry Loosemore; an anthem of the latter’s composition was on the programme for the 29 June evensong.

Among those of us who enjoy singing madrigals, Gibbons is perhaps best known for ‘The Silver Swan’, a brief but arresting piece which displays the mix of melancholia, poignancy, simplicity, profundity, wit, and occasional deliberate dissonance characteristic of music and verse of the early seventeenth century (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSAMbicPIgk&list=RDeSAMbicPIgk&index=1> ). Characteristic also was a blurring of the sacred and secular, perhaps most famously in the work of poet and dean of St Paul’s John Donne. These qualities perhaps go some way towards explaining the longevity of Gibbons’ melodies, whether, as in *Common Praise*, set to contemporary or to later words. Gibbons’ ‘Song 1’ is the tune proposed for no. 181 ‘Eternal ruler of the ceaseless round’ and for no. 318 ‘O thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray’ – the late nineteenth or early twentieth century words echoing Jacobean sensibilities in such things as their use of opposites and paradoxes to explore ideas fully. His ‘Song 34’ fits the eighteenth-century sentiments of no. 430, Charles Wesley’s ‘Forth in thy name, o Lord, I go’, while ‘Song 46’ sits equally well with no. 296 ‘Draw nigh, and take the body of our Lord’ (a nineteenth-century version of a seventh-century Latin text) and no. 553 ‘Peace, perfect peace’ (nineteenth-century words that have the simplicity and depth of George Herbert (*d.1633*)). But perhaps Gibbons’ work is best appreciated, at least as it appears in *Common Praise*, in no. 106. Here ‘Song 46’ is matched with the words of Gibbons’ longer-lived contemporary, the prolific poet and clergyman Phineas Fletcher (1582-1650),<sup>1</sup> to powerful effect. ‘Drop, drop slow tears’ conveys in twelve short lines both the deep sorrow at man’s sin and Christ’s suffering, and, in repentance, the underlying confidence in the redemption already obtained from a fatherly and merciful God. See for instance, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEHBfv5N8M> .

### *Vivienne*

[For further information, see John Harper, ‘Gibbons, Orlando...’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*]

## From the Editors

Dear Friends,

First of all a big thank you and an apology to all of you who sent contributions to the newsletter. I can only say how sorry I am that it was so badly delayed for reasons of my health and some other problems . I am hoping to resume editing before long. Janet has nobly stepped into to put this issue together and has done a great job. We can only express our very sincere gratitude.

With best wishes to all our readers,

*Catherine and Catherine*



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