

A photograph of the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Oxford, featuring its iconic spire and Gothic architecture, viewed from a street level with a large classical building in the foreground.

UNIVERSITY CHURCH

WHAT'S ON AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH

MICHAELMAS TERM 2024



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HOLY LIVING AND HOLY DYING

The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb

In 1651, Jeremy Taylor, one of the great Caroline Divines, published *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying*. It was a companion volume to another book he had published a year earlier, *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living*. These books drew on a well established tradition of writing which dated from the mid-fifteenth century. The *ars moriendi* or 'art of dying' tradition was often invoked to exhort others to pursue the *ars vivendi* or 'the art of living'.

Jeremy Taylor was one of the great moral theologians of the Church of England, and indeed, of the Church of Ireland. Born in 1613 and educated in Cambridge, he came to enjoy the patronage of William Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, becoming a Fellow of All Souls College in 1635. He preached a Sermon before the University of Oxford at St Mary's on the 5th November, the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, in 1638. He eventually became a parish priest, and during the English Civil War, he seems to have cultivated a certain anonymity. Following the Stuart Restoration, he became the Bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland.

In writing about *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, Taylor was seeking to draw out the moral implications of living well in the light of the

Christian gospel. Before the Reformation, much of this kind of reflection had been contained in priest's handbooks during the High Middle Ages. These books were devised to offer

advice to confessors providing counsel for penitents when confessing their sins. But as the practice of auricular confession became less common following the English Reformation, Taylor found in the *ars moriendi* tradition a suitable vehicle which enabled him to commend a life of holiness and a pattern of sanctification to lay Christians as they sought to follow in the way of Jesus Christ. Of course, the gospels are dominated by passion narratives, which invite reflection and meditation on the significance of Christ's death, and perhaps provokes reflection on our own mortality.

This *ars moriendi* tradition seems rather alien to us in the twenty-first century. We tend to avoid all talk of death, and we have so medicalized death that it is often hidden

from view, unseen and unwitnessed. The thought of imagining oneself on one's deathbed in order to discover what makes life worth living seems macabre to us. And yet, in our willingness to excise the possibility of death from our imagination, to avoid



all thought of death, we can all too easily be tempted to deny the terror of death. We imagine naively that we can control or subdue death. But the truth is that, for all the ingenuity and capability of human beings, death is present, powerful and active in every moment, in every event and transaction of human experience. That said, death is seldom discussed.

The paradox is that as we look forward to Michaelmas Term and beyond Oxmas, to Advent and Christmas, we can easily become preoccupied with the anticipation of a *birth*. And yet, as we move through the month of November, the Feast of All Saints, the Commemoration of All Souls, Remembrance Sunday and the commemoration of numerous martyrs, the Church invites us to meditate on these intimations of our own mortality. The season of Advent is not simply a precursor to Christmas. At the heart of Advent is an invitation to reflect on the four last things: death, judgement, heaven and hell.

The Jesuit theologian, James Keenan, points out that the *ars moriendi* tradition is an exercise in the imagination. He contrasts this with grief: 'Grief is not an act of imagination. It is existential. Grief is also not a one-time affair but an ongoing one; ...it's a lifelong one. And in this sense it is an awakening or an epiphany of the gap. Grief is not an imaginary encounter with death; it is death interrupting life. It is love exposed, raw. It is a space that we enter and feel transformed by the loss of, and yet the presence of, love.'

In the course of this term, there will be a number of events which will provoke further reflection on holy living and holy dying. These gentle discussions are intended to draw out our own, sometimes raw, human experience of death and grief, while at the same time provoking us to reflect on love, and faith, and hope.



REGULAR EVENTS

CANTERBURY LUNCHES

Tuesdays | 12.45pm – 1.50pm | Weeks 1 - 7 | Old Library

Each term on Tuesdays, we welcome students to a sandwich lunch in the Old Library for informal conversations about stimulating and topical issues from women's empowerment through music in Afghanistan to the theology of embodied thinking. A free sandwich lunch



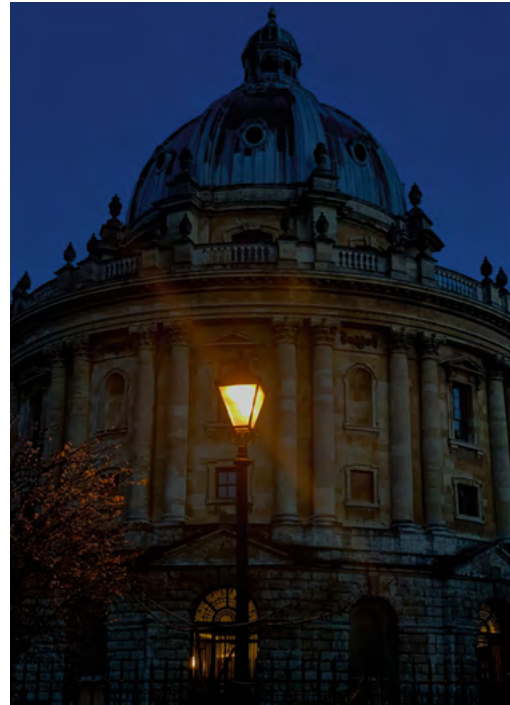
is provided just a stone's throw from the Bodleian Library. All students are welcome and further details are available on the website.

POETRY HOUR

**Wednesdays during University Term
| Old Library | 5.30pm – 6.30pm
23rd October, 6th November, 20th
November, 4th December**



Join us for an hour as we explore the poems of the great visionary, writer and artist, William Blake. If you are interested in his ideas, please join us. Poetry Hour is open to anyone interested in exploring and/or writing poetry, and is hosted by David Barr.



CANDLELIT TOURS

**Wednesday 6th
November, 4th
December | 7.30pm –
9.00pm | Nave**

The University Church is the place where the University of Oxford began. It is also the place where some of the most significant events in English church history have taken place: from the trial of Thomas Cranmer, Henry VIII's Archbishop of Canterbury, at the time of the Reformation, to the launch of the Oxford Movement and the Catholic Revival of the Church of

England in the nineteenth century. Join the Revd Dr Will Lamb, the Vicar, for an exclusive tour of the church as we explore some of its hidden highlights. The tour continues with the beautiful office of Compline, sung in the Chancel and culminates with refreshments in the Old Library. Places are limited, so please book online.

BIBLE STUDY - READING GENESIS

Fridays during University Term | Old Library
12.45pm - 1.30pm

This term, we will be studying the Book of Genesis with the help of Marilynne Robinson's *Reading Genesis*. It is a book which takes us through the story of Creation, the Fall and the loss of Eden, the account of the Flood and, then the disruption of human unity at Babel. According to Robinson, to explore these stories 'is not to say that they happened or that they didn't happen, but that their sequence is an articulation of a complex statement about reality.' Time and again the stories we find in Genesis help us to think about what it means to be human 'The book of Genesis begins with the emergence of Being in a burst of light and ends with the death and burial of a bitter, homesick old man.' Come and join us as we explore this text in all its wonder and complexity. Tea and coffee are provided.



SUNDAY FORUM

Sunday lunchtimes | Old Library | 12noon - 1.00pm
13 October, 17 November

Look out for the Sunday forum following the main Sunday morning service at St Mary's. A range of speakers will be invited to focus our minds on issues of community, justice, and the common good. All are very welcome. For lift access please speak to a steward.

"AND THEY ALL ATE, AND HAD ENOUGH..."

Sunday 13 October
Old Library | 12noon

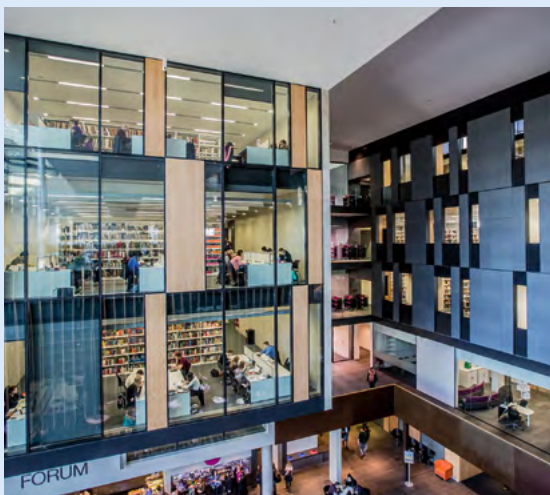
The Eucharist is sacrifice. The Eucharist is memorial. It is also, fundamentally, a meal.

We live in a city where lack of access to good food contributes to a 13-year life expectancy gap between Jericho and Blackbird Leys, and in an overheating world on the brink of global food crisis. But every time we gather in church to share bread and wine with strangers and friends, Jesus gives us a vision of a new table fellowship, and a way to live out His risen life.

I'll be exploring how reconnecting with our Lord's Supper as supper can help the Church in Oxford to live out her eucharistic vocation into food justice for all.

Chris Leckey will explore how reconnecting with our Lord's Supper as supper can help the Church in Oxford to live out her eucharistic vocation into food justice for all.





THE SECRET LIFE OF THE LIBRARY

Sunday 17 November | Old Library | 12noon
Eleanor Peers and Ashley Cushman

Oxford is home to many unique library collections, in addition to its two universities. Libraries, along with their staff and systems, are crucial to academic research and teaching - and yet they are rarely the focus of attention. In this Sunday Forum two of the congregation's librarians offer a glimpse of the vast collections and infrastructures that underpin Oxford's research and teaching, in addition to the commitment and skill of those who maintain them.

SPECIAL EVENTS

FRESH TELLINGS OF ANCIENT STORIES: SEX, BODIES AND CHRISTIANITY

Thursday 3rd October
5.30pm – 7.00pm | Nave

Few things provoke more public interest and anxiety than sex and religion. Come and attend the launch of two significant and long-awaited books this autumn and listen to the authors in

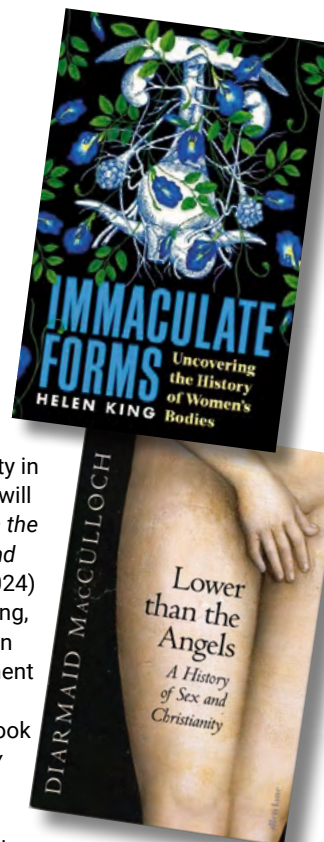


conversation. Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch, Professor Emeritus of the History of Christianity in the University of Oxford, will talk about *Little Lower than the Angels: a history of sex and Christianity* (Penguin, 2024) and Professor Helen King, Professor Emerita, Open University and a prominent lay member of General Synod, will talk about her book



Immaculate Forms: Uncovering the History of Women's Bodies (Profile, 2024). As well as stimulating conversation, there will be complimentary drinks and an opportunity to buy a signed copy of the books. All welcome.

MICHAELMAS TERM 2024



SPECIAL EVENTS

UNIVERSITY CHURCH | 7

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

Death is one of the few remaining taboo subjects in our society, and yet it is also one of the few true universals of human experience. This term, as we move through the season of All Souls and All Saints, we will mark them with three events to open up conversation about death, dying, bereavement and the afterlife.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DEATH

Sunday 20 October
5.00pm – 7.00pm
Old Library

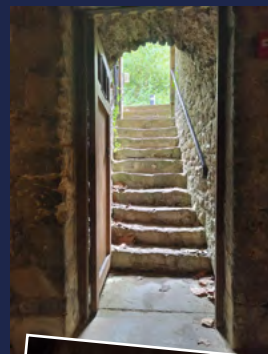
Join four eminent historians for a discussion of how attitudes to death and dying have changed through the centuries and across cultures. We will consider differences in death practices, beliefs about the afterlife, care of remains, and attitudes to violent death. We will discuss what changing attitudes towards death say about our own values today.



DEATH CAFE

Friday 1 November | 6.00pm – 8.00pm | Old Library

Gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss death. This is a completely open discussion with no agenda, no expectations, and no right answers. Death Cafes have been running across the world since 2011, and their aim is 'to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives'.



THE ART OF DYING

Saturday 16 November
10.00am – 12noon
Old Library

This panel discussion will bring together specialists from the University of Oxford and beyond. A theologian, a forensic scientist, a funeral director and a palliative care doctor meet to discuss the intersection of academic and practical approaches to death and dying, and what these different disciplines and industries can learn from each other.



CATTE STREET ILLUMINATIONS

Wednesday 6 November | 2.30pm – 4.00pm
Bodleian Library

In the Middle Ages, before the construction of the Radcliffe Camera, the area between St Mary's Church, where the original University library was located, and Duke Humfrey's Library, which became the Bodleian Library, was the centre of Oxford's bustling book trade and the production of manuscripts. There are many illuminated manuscripts within the Bodleian Library, which were produced on Catte Street in the shadow of the University Church. Come and join us on a tour with Dr Andrew Dunning, Curator of Medieval Manuscripts, as we explore some of the great treasures in the Bodleian Library. Places are limited, so please book online.



STORYTELLING WORKSHOP FOR FAMILIES

Saturday 26 October | Old Library
10am-12noon

Storytelling is one of the things that makes us human beings. Using stories from the Bible and from other cultures, we will spend a morning exploring what makes a good tale, and have a go at creating, writing and performing our own stories. Suitable for ages 7 upwards; adults warmly invited! Book a free place on Eventbrite.

CHILDREN AT ST MARY'S

We are delighted to have children worshipping with us at St Mary's at the 10.30am service. A selection of toys and books are available in the Newman Room (behind the glass brick wall) next door to the baby changing facilities.

GODLY PLAY

**Sunday 6 October, 3 November,
 1 December | Old Library**
10.30am - 11.15am

Godly Play takes place monthly in the Old Library on the first Sunday of the month during the first 45 minutes of the 10.30am Sung Eucharist. It is particularly suitable for children aged 3-8 years old and their families.



PARISH LUNCHES

Sunday 27 October and Sunday 24 November
12noon - 2.00pm | Old Library

Lunch will be served in the Old Library following the main Sunday morning service. Everyone is welcome.



SECOND COFFEE

Sundays | 12noon - 1.00pm | Weston Library Cafe

We are always delighted to welcome students and young people at the University Church. Our Second Coffee group offers a chance to catch up and compare notes weekly with an outing for coffee or drinks after the congregational gathering that follows the 10.30 service on Sundays. We also offer a range of activities, including organised dinners, with or without a discussion, movie evenings, walks and picnics, Saturday breakfasts, and visits to museums. We are always open to suggestions for discussion, study or fun. To join us, meet in the De Brome Chapel after the 10:30 service.

GARDENING DAYS

**Saturday 12 October, 9 November,
 14 December | 10.00am - 12.30pm**
Holywell Cemetery

Holywell Cemetery is one of Oxford's best kept secrets – a haven of tranquillity and reflection in a city where space and stillness are increasingly at a premium. On the second Saturday of the month, a group of volunteers help to maintain this space. We gather at 10.00am with gloves and suitable clothing and work to enhance this space. Afterwards there is an opportunity for a pub lunch. Please email admin@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk to let us know that you plan to join us.



COFFEE & DOUGHNUTS

**Wednesdays during University
 Term 11.15am - 12.00noon**
Adam de Brome Chapel

Come and join us for coffee and doughnuts, as well as company and conversation, in the De Brome Chapel from 11.15am. All are very welcome.

FREE LUNCHTIME RECITALS**Thursdays | 1.00pm - 1.45pm**

If you are free during the lunch hour, come and join us at St Mary's for our lunchtime concerts. The programme includes chamber music, organ recitals, and the occasional jazz concert. Full details for each recital are on the website. You can also sign up to be notified of any changes via the website or by emailing admin@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Thursday, 19 September 2024 **ANJULIE CHEN (PIANO) AND XIN HE (VIOLA)****Thursday 26 September 2024** **VETA VELIKHOVA****Thursday 3 October 2024** **KASPARAS MIKUZIS****Thursday 10 October 2024** **PROF. FRIEDHELM FLAMME****Thursday 17 October 2024** **YINONG XIAO****Thursday 24 October 2024** **SIMON CARREY****Thursday 31 October 2024** **VETA VELIKHOVA****Thursday 7 November 2024** **BRIDGET YEE****Thursday 14 November 2024** **SEJIN YOON****Thursday 21 November 2024** **SADRA MAHSHIDFAR****Thursday 28 November 2024** **LILY PETROVA****Thursday 5 December 2024** **JIALI WANG****Thursday 12 December 2024** **ANDRA BACILA****Thursday 19 December 2024** **TONY ADKINS**

For details about other concerts, please visit our website: www.universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

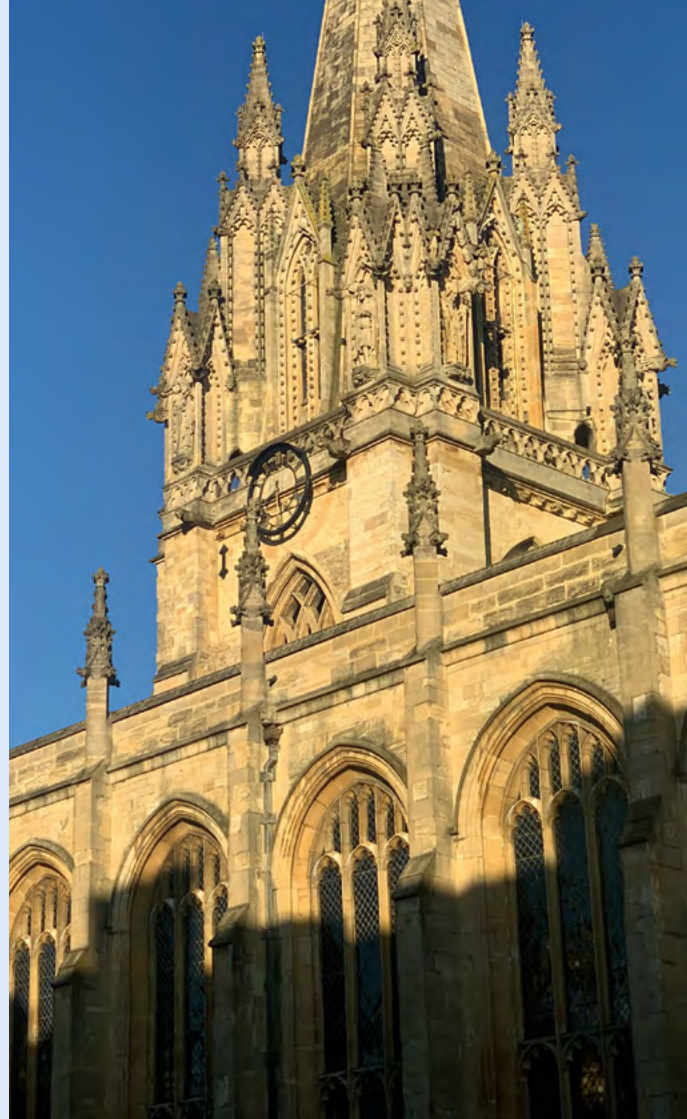
VOLUNTEERING AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH

The University Church of St Mary the Virgin is one of the oldest public buildings in Oxford. It remains the spiritual heart of the oldest University in the United Kingdom. It is the place where the University of Oxford began.

The Church remains open every single day of the year. It is a place which is open for prayer and worship. It is also a place where people can experience the beauty and heritage of this city, and enjoy hospitality and refreshment. We estimate that approximately half a million visitors a year come to St Mary's from all over the world.

We are currently looking to increase the number of volunteers who assist with our ministry of hospitality, particularly during the summer months. Volunteering roles range from being a welcomer, to offering brief tours to visitors as a guide, to helping with the maintenance and small conservation projects, as well as flower-arranging and helping to make the church look welcoming and beautiful. Volunteers enjoy a supportive environment with great colleagues. Training is provided and we make every effort to ensure that volunteers work in a safe and secure environment. If you are interested in volunteering and joining our training programme this autumn, please contact Ana-Maria Niculcea, the Volunteer Coordinator: ana-maria.niculcea@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk or why not attend our volunteering fair on Sunday 3 November at 11.45am in the Chancel?

Please help to keep the Church open for everyone



SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH

15 SEPTEMBER

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist

Preacher: The Revd Professor Ben King

5.00pm Choral Evensong (St Cross)

Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb

22 SEPTEMBER

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist

Preacher: The Revd Naomi Gardom

3.30pm Choral Evensong

29 SEPTEMBER

THE FEAST OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist

Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb

3.30pm Choral Evensong

6 OCTOBER

THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Choral Eucharist

Preacher: The Revd Hannah Cartwright

3.30pm German Lutheran Service

13 OCTOBER

HARVEST FESTIVAL

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Choral Eucharist

Preacher: The Revd Naomi Gardom

3.30pm Choral Evensong

20 OCTOBER

THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Choral Eucharist with
University Sermon

Preacher: Dr Kathryn Murphy

3.30pm Choral Evensong

27 OCTOBER

DEDICATION FESTIVAL

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Choral Eucharist

Preacher: The Revd Alan Ramsey

3.30pm Choral Evensong

3 NOVEMBER

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

8.30am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Choral Eucharist

Preacher: Dr Sarah Mortimer

3.30pm German Lutheran Service

10 NOVEMBER**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Choral Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb**3.30pm** Choral Evensong**17 NOVEMBER****THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Choral Eucharist with

University Sermon

Preacher: The Revd Professor Jane Shaw**3.30pm** Choral Evensong**24 NOVEMBER****THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Choral Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd Professor Jim Walters**3.30pm** Choral Evensong**1 DECEMBER****THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Choral Eucharist*Preacher:* Professor Anthony Reddie**6.00pm** Advent Carol Service**8 DECEMBER****THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Sung Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd Hannah Cartwright**3.30pm** Carols in the Square**6.00pm** Graduate Colleges Carol Service (ticketed)**15 DECEMBER****THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Sung Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb**6.00pm** OHM Carol Service**22 DECEMBER****THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Sung Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd David Sheen**6.00pm** Carols by Candlelight**24 DECEMBER****CHRISTMAS EVE****4.30pm** Crib Service for Children and Families**11.30pm** Midnight Mass*Preacher:* The Revd Naomi Gardom**25 DECEMBER****CHRISTMAS DAY****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Choral Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb**29 DECEMBER****THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS****8.30am** Holy Eucharist**10.30am** Sung Eucharist*Preacher:* The Revd Canon Dr Alvyn Pettersen**WEEKDAY SERVICES****9.00am** Morning Prayer**12.15pm** Holy Eucharist

UNIVERSITY SERMONS MICHAELMAS TERM 2024

The practice of delivering University Sermons dates back to the earliest days of the University of Oxford. Each year men and women from many different traditions are invited by the Vice-Chancellor to deliver sermons 'before the University'. The University's motto from Psalm 27, *Dominus illuminatio mea* (The Lord is my light), captures something of its purpose: the illumination of the mind in the context of prayer. Today, these sermons occur at the University Church and in College Chapels across the University. They provide an opportunity to hear thinkers from a range of disciplines and perspectives, drawing together the life of learning, spiritual discovery, and the quest for truth.



THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER

LATIN COMMUNION AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH AT 8.00AM

Celebrant: The Revd Dr Zachary Guiliano, Priest Vicar, Christ Church Cathedral

TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER

COURT SERMON AT THE CATHEDRAL AT 6.00PM

Preacher: The Revd Robin Griffiths-Jones, Master of the Temple, Temple Church, London

SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER

UNIVERSITY SERMON AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH AT 10.30AM

Preacher: Dr Kathryn Murphy, Oriel College

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER

RAMSDEN SERMON AT CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE AT 5.45PM

Preacher: The Very Revd Richard Sewell, Dean, St George's College, Jerusalem

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

UNIVERSITY SERMON AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH AT 10.30AM

Preacher: The Revd Canon Professor Jane Shaw, Principal of Harris Manchester College, Professor of the History of Religion, and Pro-Vice-Chancellor

SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER

UNIVERSITY SERMON ON THE SIN OF PRIDE AT BALLIOL COLLEGE AT 5.30PM

Preacher: The Revd Dr Nick Austin, Master, Campion Hall

SUNDAY 1 DECEMBER

UNIVERSITY SERMON (ADVENT SUNDAY) AT THE CATHEDRAL AT 11.00AM

Preacher: The Revd Professor Mark Harris, Professor of Science and Religion in the University of Oxford and Fellow, Harris Manchester College

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH

The University Church of St Mary the Virgin is a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive church within the Church of England. Standing in the centre of Oxford, St Mary's is the spiritual heart of the oldest university in Britain. With dignified liturgy and beautiful music, we strive to be a community of intelligent and faithful Christian witness, unafraid to engage with the modern world.

Find out more about the University Church on our website www.universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

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UNIVERSITY
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