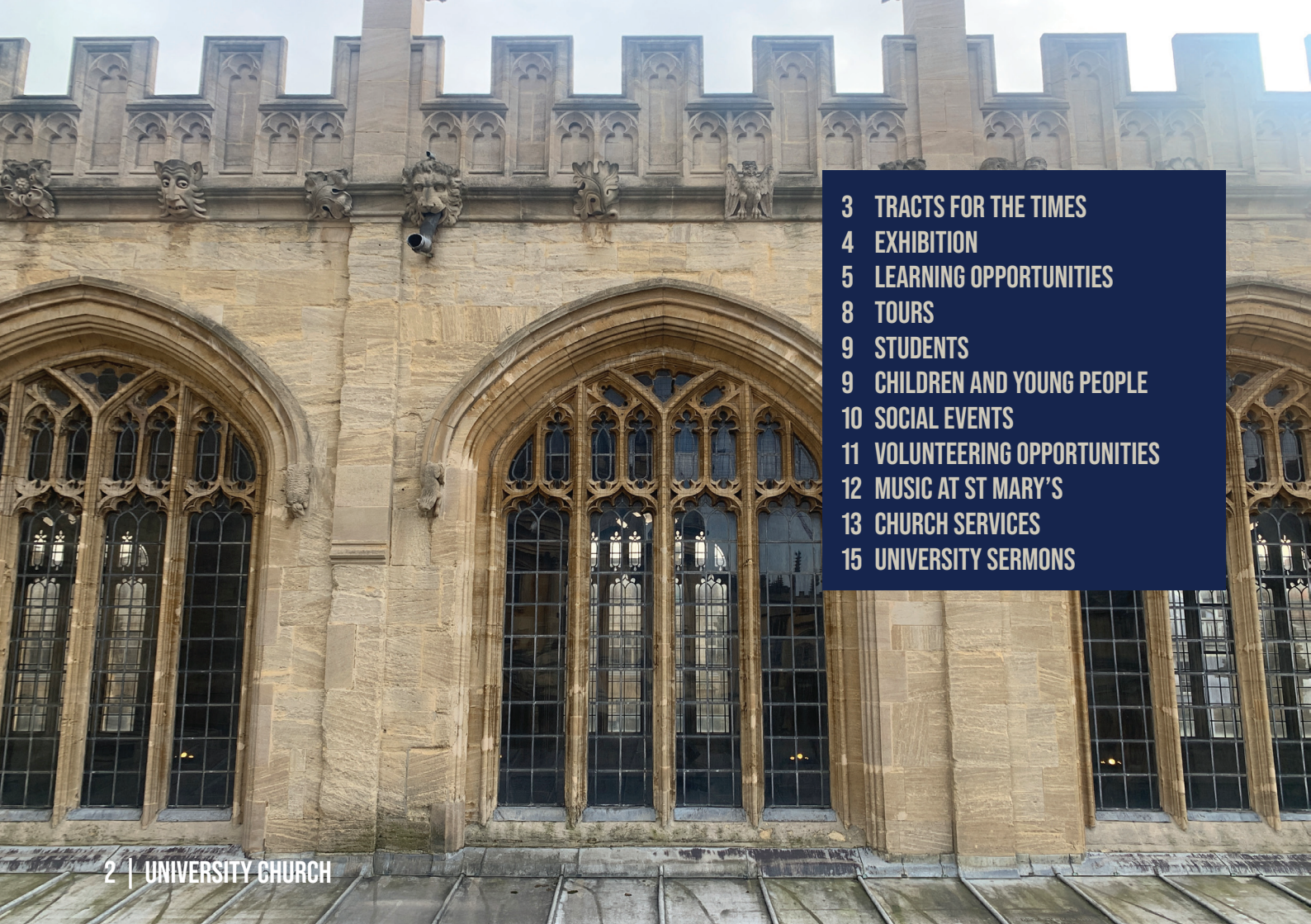


A photograph of a tall, ornate Gothic church tower, likely the University Church in Oxford, with a prominent spire. The tower is made of light-colored stone and features intricate carvings and a clock face. In the foreground, there are dark green holly leaves heavily laden with snow, partially obscuring the lower part of the tower. The sky is a pale, overcast blue.

UNIVERSITY
CHURCH

WHAT'S ON

MICHAELMAS TERM 2025



- 3 TRACTS FOR THE TIMES
- 4 EXHIBITION
- 5 LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
- 8 TOURS
- 9 STUDENTS
- 9 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
- 10 SOCIAL EVENTS
- 11 VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES
- 12 MUSIC AT ST MARY'S
- 13 CHURCH SERVICES
- 15 UNIVERSITY SERMONS

THE HOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN OXFORD

THE REVD CANON DR WILLIAM LAMB

On the north side of the University Church is a chapel, where the unsuspecting visitor will find a tomb, the final resting place of a former parish priest, Adam de Brome. He was presented to the Rectory of the University Church of St Mary the Virgin on 16 June 1320, and served as Rector of the University Church until 1326, when he became the first Provost of Oriel College.

De Brome was a rather industrious incumbent at St Mary's. He had set about completing the construction of a new Congregation House and Library for the University within the precincts of St Mary's. De Brome also set about expanding the church by adding a Lady Chapel on the north side, the place where he is now buried.

This was also a period of significant expansion for the University, and the previous few decades had seen the foundation of a number of Colleges. De Brome wanted to make his mark, and so he determined to establish his own College, applying for a licence to King Edward II.

The original licence envisaged that a small body of scholars, the 'House of the Blessed Virgin Mary' would be endowed and housed in Tackley's Inn on the High Street. But it seems that this plan was not ambitious enough. De Brome wanted to secure further property for his College, and so he persuaded the King to invest the property and assets of the Rectory of the University Church in the College. This meant that the income from church property was invested in the College. De Brome became the



Provost of the College, while the College took responsibility for appointing and providing for a Vicar for the University Church. At the same time, de Brome also managed to secure the promise of a large house owned by the King's mother just adjacent to the parsonage house. It was one of the largest and most magnificent private houses in the city. Named after its distinctive bay window, it was known as 'La Oriole'. It was this name which was quickly adopted by the College.

This year, as the College marks its 700th anniversary, we will give thanks for the long association between the University Church and Oriel College. A number of events are planned this year. Please look out for further details.

THE RHODES LEGACY THROUGH THE EYES OF ZIMBABWEAN SCULPTORS

**Saturday 11 October - Sunday 7 December 2025 |
De Brome Chapel**

This exhibition, a collaboration between Oriel College and the Oxford Zimbabwe Arts Partnership, features four original stone sculptures by Zimbabwean artists. The exhibition discusses the colonial campaign led by Cecil Rhodes in Zimbabwe, charts the history of the *Rhodes Must Fall* campaign in Oxford, and shines a light on the tradition of Zimbabwean stone sculpture. Rhodes studied at Oriel College.

Made out of Zimbabwean serpentine and springstone, the four sculptures offer a unique artistic perspective on Rhodes's impact on the people of Zimbabwe. They were chosen by a judging panel from a total of 110 submitted to a competition organised by Oxford Zimbabwe Arts Partnership (OZAP) for artists at Chitungwiza Arts Centre, near Harare. One of the sculptures is the winning submission, 'Blindfolded justice' by Wallace Mkankha, a 34-year-old artist from Chitungwiza.

Lord Mendoza CBE, Provost of Oriel College, said: "I'm proud of our collaboration with Oxford Zimbabwe Arts Partnership to explore the history that Oriel College shares with Zimbabwe. The new exhibition explores Cecil Rhodes's legacy, both in southern Africa and here in Oxford. I'm delighted that it features four original works of Zimbabwean stone sculpture. We're

looking forward to publicly displaying the four works in the UK for the first time."

The main exhibition text is written by Professor William Beinart, Rhodes Professor of Race Relations from 1997 - 2015. The curator of the exhibition is Richard Pantlin, founder of OZAP. Richard notes that "The response in Zimbabwe to the competition was inspiring. The four selected artworks and artist descriptions reflect on the effects of British colonialism there and celebrate the survival and resilience of the indigenous peoples. OZAP hopes the exhibition will stimulate constructive debate on the historic ties and shared future between our two countries."

The exhibition is open daily and free of charge.

Photo by Nehemia Nyakudanga of Rare Photography



REGULAR EVENTS

ARISE, MY LOVE: READING THE SONG OF SONGS

**Tuesdays during University Term | Old Library
12.45pm - 1.30pm**

The Song of Songs contains some of the most sublime and sensuous poetry in all of the Bible, but rarely features in the church's liturgical or spiritual reading of the Bible outside of the occasional reading at a wedding. And yet this text has been crucial for a number of spiritual giants in the history of the Church, proving fertile ground for meditation on the relationship between God and the human soul, and on the mutual desire between the two. This term, join us as we examine this stunning text, aided by the Homilies of Gregory of Nyssa, the Fourth Century theologian and spiritual writer.

POETRY HOUR

**Tuesdays during University Term | Old Library | 5.30pm - 6.30pm
21 October, 4 November, 18 November, 2 December**

Poetry Hour is open to anyone interested in exploring and/or writing poetry, and is hosted by Tess Blenkinsop. Join us for an hour in the Old Library as we explore the poetry of a number of writers, and encourage the creativity of one another.



DEATH CAFE

**Sunday 2 November
6.00pm - 8.00pm | Old Library**

Our termly Death Cafe meets in the Old Library. Come for a completely open discussion with no agenda, no expectations, and no right answers. You don't need to have been to one of our previous meetings to attend. 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'.



SUNDAY FORUM

Sunday lunchtimes | Old Library | 12noon - 1.00pm

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.

BURKINA FASO: FINDING STABILITY IN CONFLICT

Sunday 26 October | Old Library | 12noon - 1.00pm

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world, with more than 40% of the population living in poverty. The country also remains one of the most vulnerable, impacted by climate change, armed conflict and political instability. Throughout the country, record numbers of people are being forced to flee their homes and livelihoods - according to government sources, almost 1.9 million people are internally displaced, including 940,000 children (December 2022). This equates to just under 10% of the country's 22.1 million people. The Centre-North and Sahel regions are especially at risk, and a humanitarian crisis is fast unfolding. The University Church is partnering with Christian Aid to empower 10,000 households in these regions to rise out of poverty. Join Al Dutton, who has recently returned from Burkina Faso, to learn more about its most vulnerable populations and their search for stability in conflict.

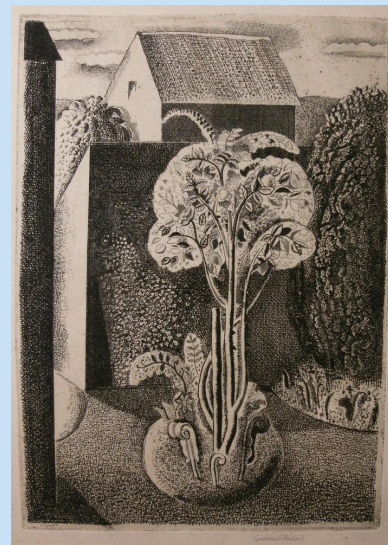
SPECIAL EVENTS

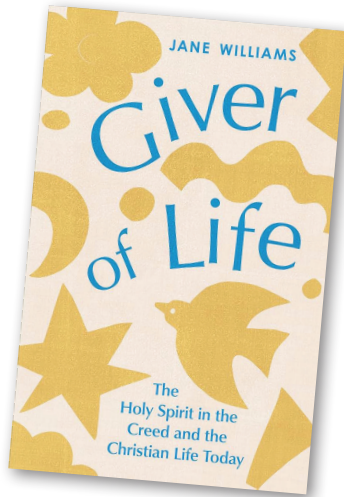
THE GARDEN OF DELIGHTS: IMAGERY FROM THE SONG OF SONGS

**Tuesday 18 November
2.30pm - 4.00pm
Western Art Print
Room, Ashmolean
Museum**

In this session with Katherine Wodehouse and Canon Will Lamb, we will explore the way in which the Song of Songs has inspired and provoked the curiosity of artists through the centuries. With its themes of love and beauty, passion and death, the poetry has long fascinated artists and others. Although

this session relates in part to the Bible Studies taking place this term, you do not need to attend the Bible Studies in order to participate in this session. Everyone is welcome. Please sign up for this session online.





GIVER OF LIFE: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NICENE CREED

Tuesday 18 November | 7.30pm - 8.45pm
Old Library

Join us for the final lecture in a series which has marked the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea in 325. In her recent book, Dr Jane Williams, McDonald Professor in Christian Theology at St Mellitus College, traces the rich theology behind the titles of the Holy Spirit through a careful exposition of the Nicene Creed and explores the deep connection between the Spirit and the life of Christ.

DISPLACING RHODES

Friday 14 November |
7.30pm - 9.00pm |
Old Library

Join a conversation on resilience, representation, and colonial legacies in Zimbabwe. With an introduction to Cecil Rhodes from Uncomfortable Oxford, and insights on resilience and sculpture from Professor William Beinart, this event serves to contextualise the current exhibition of Zimbabwean sculptures in the University Church and to explore the issues raised. This event will feature a powerful 13-minute documentary produced by OZAP, entitled "Never Again".



ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

9 October, 6 November, 11 December | 5.00pm - 7.00pm
Bodleian Library and University Church

Explore the fascinating history of the University of Oxford on this exclusive evening tour of the Bodleian Library and the University Church. Step inside the University of Oxford's central library and learn how it grew from a single book collection into one of the world's largest and most respected library systems. You'll enjoy after-hours access to the beautiful Duke Humfrey's Library, the Bodleian's oldest library room. The tour then proceeds to the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. Here you'll trace the roots of Oxford's University, from its early days to its development into a world-renowned institution. Walk through this historic church and discover the key moments that shaped the University's story. Your tour will conclude with drinks and a captivating choral performance. Places are limited, so please book online.



CANDLELIT TOURS

Thursday 27 November, Thursday 8 January
5.30pm - 6.30pm | University Church

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, and other Patrons of the University Church 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.



The Candlelit Tours are for those who have become Patrons of the University Church. Patrons are able to book two free tickets on the tour. To find out more about the Patrons Scheme, please use the QR code.

STUDENTS

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. To join us, meet in the De Brome Chapel after the 10:30 service.

BOARDGAMES NIGHT

Friday 24 October | 7.30pm - 10.30pm | The Curatage

All students and young adults are welcome for this social night of boardgames, from the strategic to the silly, with dinner provided. RSVP to naomi.gardom@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk.

LGBTQ+ CHRISTIAN STUDENT BRUNCH

Saturday 18 October | 10.30am-1.00pm | Old Library

Being LGBTQ+ and Christian can be a complicated process of negotiation balancing different identities. This brunch will be a safe and welcoming space for those exploring these identities. RSVP to naomi.gardom@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk.

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 AND SAPLINGS

**Sunday 5 & 19 October, 2 & 16 November, 7 & 21 December | Old Library
10.30am - 11.15am**

Godly Play is a child-centred approach to nurturing spiritual life through story, wonder and play. It takes place on the first Sunday of the month. Saplings is our new children's group on the third Sunday of the month. This term we will be exploring famous bible stories through the medium of lego and duplo.

Both groups take place in the Old Library during the first 45 minutes of the 10:30 Sung Eucharist. Children must be accompanied by a parent or carer.

ALL SOULS CHILD BEREAVEMENT SERVICE

Saturday 1 November | Chancel | 11am - 11:45am

A gentle, inclusive All Souls service for any children and young people who have experienced bereavement or loss. Please contact sorrel.shamel-wood@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk for further details.

EXPERIENCE CHRISTMAS

Saturday 13th December | Chancel | 10am - 12noon

Come and join us in the Chancel for Christmas-themed crafts, activities, a story, singing and some special guests! Ideal for ages 3-11.

PARISH LUNCHES

Sunday 19 October and Sunday 23 November
12noon - 2.00pm | Old Library

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



GARDENING DAYS

Saturday 11 October, 8 November,
13 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 helps 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
Terms | 11.15am - 12.00noon
Adam de Brome Chapel

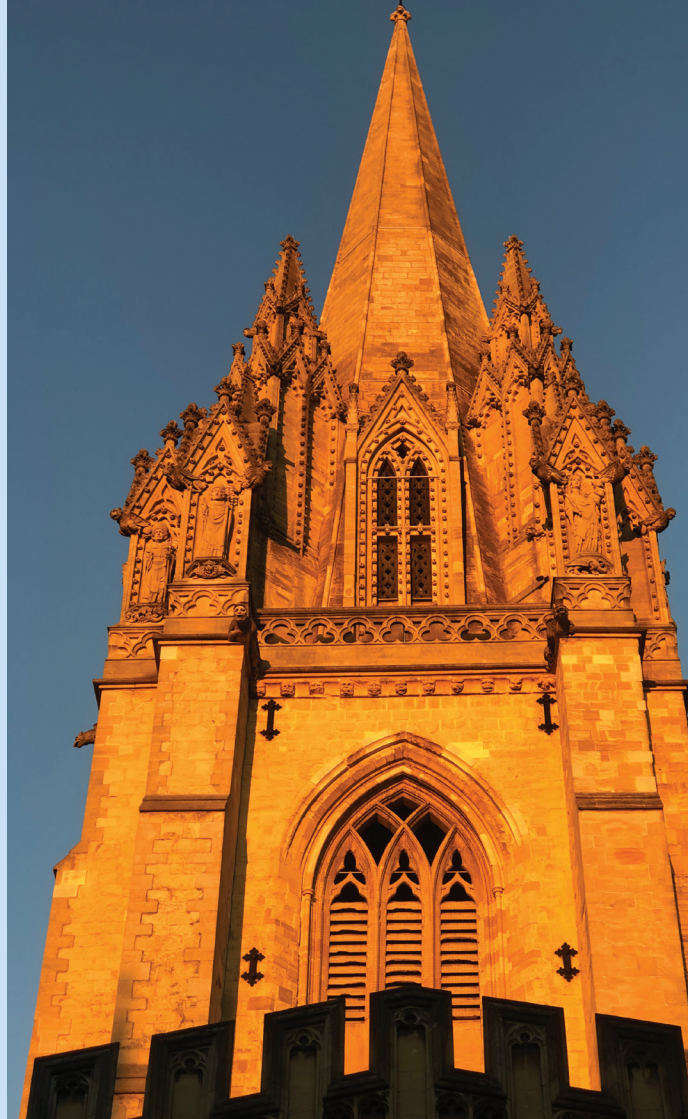


VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

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.. We estimate that approximately half a million visitors a year come to St Mary's from all over the world.

Volunteering roles range from being a welcomer, to offering brief tours to visitors as a guide, to assisting with the Sunday services 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



VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

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 events@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

2 October	Elizaveta Velikhova
9 October	Mihaly Gyorf
16 October	Yixiang Cheng
23 October	Katya Grabova
30 October	Lin Xu Zhang
6 November	Sadra Mahshidfar
13 November	Sherri Lun
20 November	Jiali Wang
27 November	Andra Bacila
4 December	Anson Lam
11 December	To be confirmed
18 December	Elizabeth Geng and Phoebe Liu

CONCERTS

**Hospices of Hope
Fundraising Concert**
11 October | 7.00pm

Oxford Chamber Orchestra
18 October | 7.30pm

Marin Maseki
29 October | 7.00pm

Instruments of Time & Truth
5 November | 6.30pm

**East Oxford Community Choir
& Twinned Choir from Grenoble**
7 November | 7.30pm

Music at Oxford
13 November | 7.30pm

Opus 48
15 November | Time to be confirmed

OU Sinfonietta
21 November | Time to be confirmed

City Music Promotions
26 November | 7.30pm



**Chapel Choirs of University College
and St Edmund Hall**
29 November | 7.30pm

City of Oxford Choir
6 December | Time to be confirmed

Opus 48
13 December | Time to be confirmed

Steve Hogarth & Music at Oxford
19 December | 19.30

Instruments of Time & Truth
20 December | Time to be confirmed

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

SUNDAY SERVICES

5 OCTOBER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: Mrs Catharine Ryan
 3.30pm German Lutheran Service

12 OCTOBER THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb
 3.30pm Choral Evensong

19 OCTOBER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist with University Sermon
Preacher: The Revd Dr Harriet Harris
 3.30pm Choral Evensong

26 OCTOBER DEDICATION FESTIVAL

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Hannah Cartwright
 3.30pm Choral Evensong

2 NOVEMBER ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Naomi Gardom
 3.30pm German Lutheran Service

9 NOVEMBER REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb
 3.30pm Choral Evensong

16 NOVEMBER THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist with University Sermon
Preacher: Professor Peter McCullough
 3.30pm Choral Evensong

23 NOVEMBER THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Alan Ramsey
 3.30pm Choral Evensong

30 NOVEMBER THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Dr Reginald Lynch OP
 6.00pm Advent Carol Service

7 DECEMBER THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Hannah Cartwright
 6.00pm Graduate Colleges Carol Service (ticketed)
Preacher: The Rt Revd Saju Muthulaly

14 DECEMBER THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Naomi Gardom
 3.30pm Shoppers' Carol Service

21 DECEMBER THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb
 6.00pm Carols by Candlelight

24 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS EVE

4.30pm Crib Service for Children and Families
 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb

25 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS DAY

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb

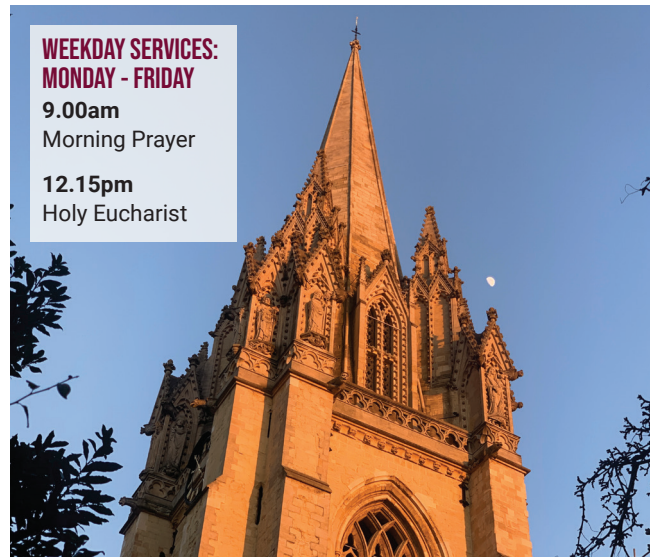
28 DECEMBER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

8.30am Holy Eucharist
 10.30am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: The Revd Sorrel Shamel-Wood

**WEEKDAY SERVICES:
MONDAY - FRIDAY**

9.00am
 Morning Prayer

12.15pm
 Holy Eucharist



UNIVERSITY SERMONS

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 9 OCTOBER LATIN COMMUNION AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH AT 8.00AM

Celebrant: The Revd Dr Jane Baun, Chaplain and Welfare Officer, Wadham College

TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER COURT SERMON AT THE CATHEDRAL AT 6.00PM

Preacher: Professor Jeremias Adams-Prassl, Fellow in Law and Founder's Chaplain, Magdalen College

SUNDAY 19 OCTOBER UNIVERSITY SERMON AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH AT 10.30AM

Preacher: The Revd Dr Harriet Harris, University Chaplain and Head of the Chaplaincy Service, University of Edinburgh

SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER RAMSDEN SERMON AT TRINITY COLLEGE AT 6.00PM

Preacher: Dr Renie Chow Choy, Public Historian, Westminster Abbey, and Associate Lecturer, Westcott House, Cambridge

SUNDAY 16 NOVEMBER UNIVERSITY SERMON AT THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH AT 10.30AM

Preacher: Professor Peter McCullough, Lincoln College

SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER UNIVERSITY SERMON ON THE SIN OF PRIDE AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT 5.45PM

Preacher: Dame Helen Ghosh, Master of Balliol College

SUNDAY 30 NOVEMBER UNIVERSITY SERMON (ADVENT SUNDAY) AT THE CATHEDRAL AT 9.35AM

Preacher: The Rt Revd Mark Tanner, Lord Bishop of Chester

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.

Vicar | The Revd Canon Dr William Lamb
vicar@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Associate Vicar | The Revd Hannah Cartwright
hannah.cartwright@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Associate Priest | The Revd Alan Ramsey
alan.ramsey@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Assistant Curate | The Revd Naomi Gardom
naomi.gardom@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Children, Families & Schools Chaplain
The Revd Sorrel Shamel-Wood
sorrel.shamel-wood@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Director of Music | Robert Howarth
robert.howarth@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Operations Manager | Patrick Croom
patrick.croom@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Administrator | Jenny Shearan
admin@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Events Officer | Sarah Ockwell
events@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Communications & Volunteers
Ana-Maria Niculcea
ana-maria.niculcea@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

Safeguarding Officer | Judith Pettersen
safeguarding@universitychurch.ox.ac.uk

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

UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, HIGH STREET, OXFORD. OX1 4BJ
01865 279110 | WWW.UNIVERSITYCHURCH.OX.AC.UK

UNIVERSITY
CHURCH