



Produced for the parish of St Michael & All Angels, Summertown
December 2021

Local charities support refugees

Every refugee story is different. When Adamma was nineteen she was already living on the streets in Nigeria; Ahmad was forced to flee Tehran after converting to Christianity; Farid could not live as a gay man in Saudi Arabia; Soraya was a doctor in Baghdad before war broke out. For many who reach



Amal the puppet highlighting the plight of young refugees

Photo: Sophie Smith

the UK the trauma already suffered is compounded by new challenges. Asylum Welcome and Refugee Resource are two Oxfordshire charities providing help.

Asylum Welcome has been working with councils and other public bodies to support over 150 recent Afghan arrivals during what could be an extended stay in transition hotels while they await long-term housing.

Refugee Resource is the only charity in Oxfordshire offering a range of complementary services to support the psychological, emotional and social well-being of refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants.

Another smaller organisation, Oxford Welcomes Refugees, was set up by volunteers from local churches to resettle a family under the Community Sponsorship Scheme, which provides a safe route for vulnerable refugees to reach the UK. It has found and equipped a home and will provide continuing support for the family.

Volunteers play a vital role in these efforts, acting as translators, mentors, teachers of English, foodbank organisers, and fundraisers. Financial donations are hugely welcomed and, depending on changing circumstances, so are donations of food, clothing and other goods.

See: www.asylum-welcome.org ;
www.refugeeresource.org.uk ;
www.oxford.anglican.org/oxford-welcomes-refugees/ ; www.facebook.com/OxfordshireAfghanAid

NOA - bringing people together



Monkey Music is great fun for little ones

The reception area of the North Oxford Association community centre (NOA) in Diamond Place is light and spacious. Visitors are welcomed by a volunteer and there's a café counter selling hot drinks.

A wide range of classes takes place within the building – art, music, craft, language, dance, fitness and more. If you want to start your own project there are rooms of various sizes available for hire. A large, bright, hexagonal hall is ideal for parties and other larger events including the monthly seniors' lunch club.

Association manager, Joe Shuter says: 'I love it when the building is buzzing with lots of people having a good time.'

The centre was closed for several months during lockdown but opened again last September.

Sensible precautions have been put in place and the full range of activities is being gradually reintroduced. Options for pre-school children and retired people were the first to re-start. Children flocked back to Baby Ballet and Monkey Music and there are places available to join other groups, including Bridge Club on Friday afternoons and Health Walks on Tuesday mornings.



Health Walkers enjoying a neighbourhood stroll

NOA is a great neighbourhood centre, offering opportunities for local people to try something different or just to meet up and make new friends. The organisation has been serving our community for over 50 years now and its aim has always been 'to find out what the community wants and strive to provide it'. It's very inclusive so why not just drop in for a chat.

The centre is always looking for new volunteers to help out, too.

See: www.northoxfordassociation.co.uk or 01865 552295



Musical associations of Oxford

Andrew Gant writes: Oxford is well known for its literary associations; less so for its musical ones. But look beneath the surface, and they are there.

The stirring Victorian hymn *O Jesus, I have promised* is set to a tune called *Wolvercote* by William Harold Ferguson, a product of Magdalen College School and Keble College, and later headmaster of St Edward's School.



Ferguson's near-contemporary and near-neighbour, Percy Manning, pioneered an equally influential strand of Victorian music-making, folksong. Manning is memorialised with a blue plaque on his last

home, 300 Banbury Road, and just up the road is a block of flats named after the composer who did more than anyone to bring English folk music into the concert hall, Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Not far away, in Marston, a group of streets is named after Oxford musicians and musical scholars from Restoration times to the mid 20th century. Hugh Allen (Hugh Allen Crescent) was Director of the Royal College of Music, John Weldon (Weldon Road) a composer and organist at New College. Sydney Nicholson (Nicholson Road) founded the Royal School of Church Music, and Purcell Road is named, not after Henry, but his brother Daniel, a composer and organist of Magdalen College. Finally, Crotch Crescent commemorates William Crotch, a precociously talented contemporary of Mozart, who gave public recitals at the age of three, became organist of Christ Church, but sadly never really fulfilled his youthful promise.

Other associations can be found in the music itself. Vaughan Williams set words written by Matthew Arnold in his *An Oxford Elegy*, in which a traveller wanders reflectively up Cumnor Hill to admire the view of the city below.

In more recent times Oxford has acted as the cradle for some notable bands, including Radiohead, Foals, and Glass Animals, and at least one hit song has been set in Oxford, Stornoway's *Zorbing*, which describes trundling through the city in a giant plastic sphere. It's set in Cowley but with a tweak or two could easily move to the gentle slopes of North Oxford.

Zorbing in Cutteslowe Park, anyone?

Bridge for the under 20s

The Oxford Junior Bridge Club for young people aged 8 to 19 has been running for seven years on Sunday afternoons in Summertown. Some juniors have reached international standard but most have simply enjoyed



Young bridge players Ellie and Amaan

learning this absorbing card game. Club members, like all young people, found lockdown difficult but enjoyed aspects of online learning, as well as monthly competitions. Organiser Holly Kilpatrick says: 'Now we are back playing face to face, we have renewed our emphasis on fun, enjoyment, tea and cakes!'

The club caters for all levels from beginners upwards and families are welcome. Christmas celebrations will include a party and mini competition. The spring term starts with a free taster session on 9th January.

Contact: juniorbridgeoxford@gmail.com or see www.bridgewebs.com/bridge4schools

yourstruly... Matthew Cheetham

General practitioner



Matthew is a truly local GP. He grew up in Oxford and was educated at The Cherwell School before reading English at Cambridge. He worked as a civil servant initially but started medical training in his mid-twenties, qualifying in 2001. Matthew joined the Summertown Health Centre in 2006 and enjoys meeting a wide range of

people and engaging with a huge number of medical conditions in his work there. He wouldn't want to do anything else. The current building, however, is cramped and difficult to access and Matthew has been searching for new premises for the practice for many years. He says: 'The Diamond Place redevelopment offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve medical facilities for the 27,000 patients who use our local practices.' Matthew hopes that people will join him in lobbying our local councillors and MP in support of this aspiration.

In his free time Matthew enjoys travel, sport and spending time with his family.

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Summertown library - volunteers needed!

Book borrowing at Summertown Library is gradually getting back to pre-Covid levels with readers returning to browse the well-stocked shelves. But the library offers other useful services too. Anyone who wants to apply for a resident's parking permit, a bus pass, or a blue parking badge but isn't able to upload the relevant documents at home can book an appointment for help with their application. The computers are available for other purposes too and the



Assistant library manager,
Javier Gomez Ortiz

library is currently seeking computer-literate volunteers to act as 'digital helpers' for people who need assistance.

There is also a vacancy for someone to run the popular weekly Rhyme Time class for pre-schoolers and their carers. Training is available for both positions.

If you'd like to help contact:

summertown.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk or 01865 558290

Pompette – a passion for food

When Pascal and Laura Wiedemann opened Pompette in South Parade in 2018 their aim was to provide really good European food in a relaxed environment. Everything is made from scratch by classically-trained Pascal and his team, including their baguettes and ice cream.



The couple responded to lockdown by providing takeaway meals that could be finished off at home, and setting up a deli in the front of the restaurant. This enabled them to keep their supplier base. Loyal customers – much valued by Laura – still had access to Pompette meals, and new customers could discover the restaurant even while the dining area was closed.

Pascal trained at Oxford Brookes University and opened Terroirs near London's Charing Cross before moving to Summertown.

www.pompetterestaurant.com

Cool for school

Lunchtimes at The Swan School

The Swan School opened at its new site in September and one of its distinctive features is the inclusive practice of 'family dining'. Every lunchtime students and teachers sit down together to share the same hot vegetarian meal made from fresh ingredients, locally sourced where possible, and carefully planned to be balanced as well as delicious.



The idea is to create a family atmosphere where conversation is encouraged and everyone helps with laying the table, serving the food and tidying up. A member of staff leads a daily 'reflection' plus weekly 'gratitudes' where students can thank others for what they have done for them during the week. This term there will be a celebratory Christmas lunch with musical entertainment provided by the students.

Cotteslowe children celebrate light

The children of Cotteslowe School took part enthusiastically in this year's Oxford Christmas Light Festival, joining others in the community to make colourful 'stained glass' window decorations to enhance homes and buildings along the path of the



Cotteslowe Light Trail. Some children also attended half-term lantern-making workshops at the Cotteslowe Garden Centre.

Holding lanterns lit by LED lights, the children paraded

from the community centre through Cotteslowe Park. On the way they were entertained by mini performances from members of the OX2 Collective, a new youth theatre venture between pupils from The Swan School and St Edward's School. At the garden centre the children enjoyed a range of seasonal treats and a magical woodland walk of illuminated Christmas trees.

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yourparish

Belonging to the Summertown-Wolvercote Church Partnership

St Michael & All Angels Church *All are welcome!*

We are open for public worship but will keep Covid protocols so that people feel as safe as possible.

Sundays

8am: Holy Eucharist – traditional language; no hymns

10am: Parish Eucharist – with choir and hymns

6.30pm first Sunday of the month: Silent prayer

6.30pm all other Sundays: Taizé worship – a short, meditative candlelit service with chants and silent prayer.

Weekdays

9am Mondays to Fridays: Morning prayer

10.15am Tuesdays: Baby and toddler group

Contact Clare Leal: curate@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

5.30pm Thursdays: Choristers' practice age 3+ Term-time only. Contact Alice: **07791 328108**

6.30pm Thursdays: Choir practice

Contact Stephen: **07717 852020**

8.30am first Saturday of the month: Men's breakfast
An informal social. Contact Steve: **01865 552475**

Christmas services

Sunday 19th December

8am: Holy Eucharist (traditional language)

10am: Parish Eucharist

6.30pm: Candlelit service of lessons and carols

Tuesday 21st December

10am – noon: Baby and toddler group Christmas celebration

Friday 24th December – Christmas Eve

4pm: Crib service for children and families

11.30pm: Midnight mass

Saturday 25th December – Christmas Day

8am: Holy Eucharist (traditional language)

10am: Holy Eucharist for the Nativity of our Lord

Sunday 26th December – The Feast of St Stephen

8am: Holy Eucharist (traditional language)

10am: Parish Eucharist

Contact details

The Revd Gavin Knight (vicar)

The Vicarage, 33 Lonsdale Road, OX2 7ES
07833 251939

*'No matter where you are on the journey
of faith, you are always welcome
at St Michael & All Angels!'*

Parish office

Contact: Leah Mattinson **01865 552738**;
office@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

Church and church hall bookings

The church and the upper and lower church halls (with kitchens) are available for hire.

Contact: bookings@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

God in person

The Vicar writes: Last Christmas felt more virtual than real as we busily recorded and live-streamed services for those who weren't able to come to church in person. Compare this to the first Christmas experience. Never had God been so real! Born in human likeness, God made flesh, Jesus adopted the frailty of our condition. The witnesses of the birth were struck by the immediacy and shock of the event. This was the powerful, physical wonder of the earth being kissed by heaven.

What is remarkable about the birth narrative is that God works within our scope and scale, our sense of reality. God walks alongside us, becoming a fellow traveller, sensing our earthly pleasures and pains. God knows what it is to be one of us. This is the message of Christmas. God is not some sort of remote overlord, but a helpless, vulnerable, needy child - God 'in person'.

This year, the church is open and keeping to Covid safety procedures. Come and experience the mystery of Immanuel - God in person, God with us.

The baby and toddler group



The baby and toddler group at St Michael & All Angels takes place between 10.15 and 11.45 on Tuesday mornings. Run by a small team of volunteers from the congregation, the group was created in 2002. It is open free of charge to the whole community, including children with special needs. Over time it has accumulated a wide variety of toys and activities for the children, from babies to older toddlers and from the

shy and hesitant to the more boisterous. The pink car is always a favourite! The church's roomy interior provides plenty of space for play and makes social distancing less challenging for the adults. After the months of lockdown earlier in the year children, parents and carers are enjoying the chance to meet and mix again. Please just drop in or contact Clare Leal at curate@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

Thank you!



Debbie Hamilton writes: During Christian Aid week in May, our volunteers delivered over 2,000 envelopes to homes in our neighbourhood. Instead of collecting the envelopes, as in previous years, we asked people to return their donations to a nearby address. In total we raised a fantastic £3,268.78. Thank you so much for all your generous donations.

For parish news, services and events go to our website: www.stmichaels-summertown.org.uk
Join the crowd, sign up to **Gavin's WEEKLY BLOG FOR ALL SEASONS:** www.gavinknight.me