

Why not try church?

The Church Search is designed to equip all those in Oxford wanting to try church at the start of a new academic year! Churches are the best places to find communities of Christians who are delighted to get to know you and invest in your personal and spiritual growth during your time in Oxford. Below are some personal testimonials of students from a variety of churches across the city, as well as their contact details – they would love to accompany you if you'd like to visit their church.

The Church Search will exist formally for the first two Sundays of Michaelmas (October 13th and 20th) but please do continue to reach out to individuals afterward if you still want to try out churches!

The Church Search is run by OICCU, the Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union. If you have any questions please email OICCU via hannah.devenish@regents.ox.ac.uk or speak to your college representative, listed on the OICCU website: Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (oiccu.org) To find out more about us, follow us on Instagram: @the_oiccu

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St. Aldates:

Where: St Aldate's, OX1 1BT

When: Four services across the day – 10am, 12pm (official student service followed by student lunch), 4pm, 6pm

Website: https://staldates.org.uk/

What students have to say:

'I love Aldates. It's a large, warm, passionate church where there's so many opportunities to live out faith in the week, be it helping refugees learn english or serving on kids group. The teaching is fantastic, both challenging and gratifying and there's been worship on the sight for over a 1000 years. We have ~250 students in the student community with a 50/50 split with Brookes (so good to leave that uni-of bubble!), where I've found friends for life and had the joy of seeing many more mates who wouldn't have called themselves Christian come to faith. It's a total gift.'

'I chose to go to Aldates because I wanted to get stuck into a church with lots of support for student life in Oxford. I love the student nights, and have found church to be such a welcoming and grounding place during the busyness of Oxford terms.'

'St Aldates is a super welcoming church in the centre of Oxford - a large student community, incredible teaching and a good amount of sung worship, I found a home here wonderfully quickly in my first term.'

Contact:

Luke – luke.pennystan@new.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Aldates Foyer college at 11:50am (Sun 13th) and 5:50pm (Sun 20th)

Naomi – naomi.rushton@st-annes.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Pret a Manger on Cornmarket Street from 11:40am

Josh – joshua.wright@hertford.ox.ac.uk to meet by the Radcliffe Camera at 11:40am and/or 5:40pm

St. Ebbes:

Where: Littlegate St, OX1 1RL

When: 10 am, 4pm and 6:30pm

Website: **https://stebbes.org/**

What students have to say:

'Ebbe's is a church that is both rooted in the Bible and has a very close-knit community of students; I have grown so much in my knowledge of God and his Word this year while also making lovely friends that I can walk my journey of faith with. Ebbe's is a church that is big but feels quite small once you start meeting people - it really helps that we have a truly great student team whose friendliness and support were a big factor in why I settled here!'

'I love St Ebbe's because the people here are so welcoming and caring, and because the church family is quite large there's a huge range of ages to get to know - we have plenty of families, older folk and loads of students too! Our student workers, Josh and Ellie, are fantastic, they help look after the students at Ebbe's, and we would love to get to know you if you decide to come along!'

'I got settled at Ebbe's in my first term at Oxford - I was particularly drawn to the faithfulness of preaching through scripture, the student Bible study on Thursday evenings, the evangelical outlook, community impact, and opportunities to grow through service and encounters with other congregants. Other more personal factors included styles of worship and service (it's a "please be seated" church, as one visiting friend ribbed), Anglican theology and a central location.'

'I chose St Ebbe's because of the thorough and Biblical teaching. I learn so much truth each Sunday and have really grown through the efforts poured into Focus (student night on a Thursday). There are also opportunities for fun and a wonderful sense of community.'

Contact:

Amy – amy.bloch@balliol.ox.ac.uk to meet outside the Radcliffe Camera and walk to the 10am together!

Benjamin – benjamin.mathole@stcatz.ox.ac.uk to meet by Carfax at 9:45am and/or 6:15pm

George – george.mack@pemb.ox.ac.uk to meet by Carfax at 9:40am and/or 6:10pm

Amelia – amelia.mclauchlan@som.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Black Sheep café at 6:10pm

Emmanuel Church:

Where: Oxford Spires Academy, Glanville Road, OX4 2AU

When: 10:30am

Website: **https://www.emmanueloxford.org/**

What students have to say:

'I love Emmanuel Church because it feels like home. It's a family church with a range of ages where everyone is caring. The teaching is great and helps me grow in my faith.'

'Emmanuel is a warm and friendly church. People value meeting students and getting to know you; it's a place where you can make great Godly friendships.'

'I love being a part of Emmanuel, it's a community that truly embodies the teachings of Romans 12:5 : "So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others".'

Contact:

students@emmanueloxford.org to let people know you will be coming along and/or find Nathan at 10am outside Magdalen college both Sundays!

Magdalen Road:

When: 10:30am, 7pm

Where: The Old Schoolhouse, Hertford Street, OX4 3AJ

Website: **https://mrc-oxford.org/Group/Group.aspx?ID=85681**

What students have to say:

'Magdalen road church is a welcoming, diverse, and Jesus-centred church that has a real sense of community and love for each other. I love the church because of its great teaching, the lovely family feel it has, and the way it gave me a well needed break from the student bubble. Joining a homegroup that's full of people in so many different stages of life is so encouraging and edifying, and the kindness and warmth that I've been shown has been so helpful for settling in Oxford. Give it and go and you'll be welcomed with open arms!'

'MRC is a super friendly, multi-generational, community church that is a little way out of the town centre. I love the church as it has an attitude of loving God, loving the growing diversity of the church members, challenging itself to be more outward looking, and integrating this with great teaching and worship. I'm currently the only student there at the moment, which really takes me out of the 'Oxford bubble' and allows me to meet a whole new group of wise and generous Christians outside of Uni.'

Contact:

Susanna – susanna.nash@lmh.ox.ac.uk to arrange a time and place to meet for one of the services

Oxford Community Church

Where: The King's Centre, Osney Mead, OX2 0ES

When: 10:30am

Website: **https://oxford.occ.org.uk/**

What students have to say:

'My favourite thing about OCC is the sung worship. People are worshipping in different ways around you, and it feels so free like we're just praising God exactly how He made us. The student community is also amazing; we have a free student lunch each week after the service occasionally held at the home of a family from OCC which is brilliant for getting to know both students really well, and also other members of the church!'

'I chose OCC because it is a great church with a really lovely and supportive group of students. The congregation are very welcoming and I find the sermons helpful and a good reminder to refocus between weeks of uni stress. Student lunches afterwards are also a good time to get to know people and make new friends.'

'Something I deeply cherish about the people at OCC is just how soft-hearted they are. It is a community in constant pursuit of God's presence, and living from the overflow of His Spirit working in our lives in every interaction with one another. It is a place where you very quickly feel known and cared for, and where you are encouraged to come to our amazing heavenly Father authentically, and allow Him to shape you. I have fallen more in love with scripture while at OCC and have been moulded and shaped in ways I did not think I needed to be until I arrived! It is honestly such a blessing to be a part of a culture so beautifully modelling what it means to speak truth in love.'

Contacts:

Bethany – bethany.alexander@lmh.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Worcester college at 10am

Ben – benjamin.watson@univ.ox.ac.uk to meet by Carfax at 10am (only available on 20th)

Oxford Presbyterian Church:

Where: Northgate Hall, St. Michael's Street, 0X1 2DU

When: 10:30am and 5pm

Website: **https://www.oxfordpres.co.uk/**

What students have to say:

'I chose OxPres because of its Christ-centeredness and strong Bible teaching. I was looking for a friendly, reformed church with lots of space to grow and learn. Oxpres has been exactly that, with every Sunday service/Bible study leaving me encouraged and amazed! I've made great friends here and can't wait to meet you too!'

'I chose to settle at Oxford Pres because of the amazing teaching and the nice blend of students, families and older folk at the church. I almost always come away from the meetings feeling challenged and encouraged, ready for the busy week that lies ahead. Also the student meetings on Tuesdays (even weeks) are not to be missed!'

Contacts:

Elodie – elodie.olatunji@st-annes.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Pret a Manger on Cornmarket

Street: 10:10am for morning service, 4:45pm for evening service

Harry – harry.pratt@queens.ox.ac.uk to meet outside the Radliffe Camera: 10:15am for

morning service, 4:45pm for evening service

Trinity Church

Where: St. Michael at the Northgate, OX1 3EY

When: 6:30pm

Website: **https://www.trinitychurchoxford.com/**

What students have to say:

'Trinity Church is a close-knit church family that felt like home when I first attended their services. I was welcomed and able to get stuck into the life of the church very quickly! Trinity holds various events and seminars across term. After evening services we often play board games and catch up together. We also have homegroups, where we meet in houses and enjoy dinner before getting stuck into the Bible each week. It has been a great way to step out of the student bubble and enjoy fellowship with Christians in different stages of their lives. I love the way that Trinity prioritises God's Word and seeks to be like Jesus in all aspects of its services and community. It has filled me with love and support through my life as a student so far!'

'I like Trinity church because the preaching and worship is deeply grounded in the Word. I also love that it is defined as a gospel church: meaning we are strict in how we define the gospel but are more flexible on other secondary and tertiary issues, which I think is how it should be. We still have convictions on those secondary and tertiary issues, like baptism for example, which one would need to take into account should they be interested in pursuing church membership. I am also a fan of the smaller community at Trinity, which makes it feel more like a family. However, it's not so small to the point that it feels suffocating.'

Contacts:

Kezia – kezia.chako@worc.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Waterstones on Cornmarket at 5:20pm

Samuel – samuel.dickson@regents.ox.ac.uk to meet outside Pusey House on St. Giles Street

at 4:45pm for pre-service social time from 5pm

Woodstock Road:

Where: 198 Woodstock Road, OX2 7NQ

When: 10:30am, 1:30pm

Website: **https://wrbc.org.uk/**

What students have to say:

'I picked Woody Road because of its fantastic bible teaching and super welcoming family-feel (it's nice to get out of the student bubble to worship and fellowship with a range of ages and backgrounds). The Sunday timings of 10:30am morning service, followed by yummy free cooked lunch altogether and a seminar-style afternoon service 1:30-2:30pm also work really well!'

'I'm really thankful for the clear, faithful Bible teaching at Woody Road, and for the chance to be part of such a wise and warm church family as I seek to apply it to my life. There aren't many students, but to be honest I really appreciate the chance to sit on a proper sofa at midweek home-group with people who are older and wiser than me and escape student-land for the evening! Free hot lunch for the whole church most weeks is also a definite plus!'

Contact:

Nina – nina.stone@chch.ox.ac.uk to arrange a place to meet for the 13th or 20th

Martha – martha.todman@lmh.ox.ac.uk to arrange a place to meet for the 20th