German-speaking Lutheran Congregation at Oxford

Church Council

The church council had the following members in 2025:

Elisabeth von Braunschweig (Chair)
Lisa van Maasakkers (Deputy Chair)
Lucie Abeler-Dörner (Treasurer)
Sebastian Fuhrmann (Pastor)
Michaela Scheuermann-Freestone
Patricia Zachhuber
Sandra Hay
Günther von Billerbeck

Address:	15A Lathbury Road Oxford OX2 7AT
Registered Charity number:	286646
Principal Bankers:	HSBC 6 High Street Abingdon OX14 5AZ

German-Speaking Lutheran Congregation of Oxford Pastor Dr. Sebastian Fuhrmann
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Report on Parish Work 2025–2026 for the AGM on 1 March 2026

1. New Pastor and Staffing Situation

Since the departure of Pastor Klehn, the congregation was led by Udo Bauer and, from July 2024, Pastor Dr. Uwe Vetter, in cooperation with the Church Council. Both also supported the recruitment process, which concluded with my appointment—Pastor Sebastian Fuhrmann from Berlin. Both the congregation and I are particularly grateful to Udo Bauer for providing continuity during this transitional period. I am also very grateful to Uwe Vetter for his friendly, competent, and patient guidance in preparing the candidates, and subsequently me, for this new office.

Udo Bauer's fixed-term position was not extended and will not be filled again in the form of a Parish Assistant. The Church Councils of our congregations are currently in a clarification process to determine which areas of work could be covered by one or two employees (potentially in part-time roles). Possible focus areas include work with children and young families, student outreach, or cultural management and public relations. As of now, no definitive trend is discernible.

On a positive note, provided she passes her upcoming examination in three weeks, the congregation will have a licensed lay preacher (*Prädikantin*) in Lucie Abeler-Dörner, who is trained and authorized to lead services independently. A key topic for the coming year will be how Lucie's training and qualifications can further benefit the congregation. The period of vacancy demonstrated that the Oxford congregation is a strong community, capable of organizing and creatively shaping its parish life. More on this below.

2. Parish Leadership

The period of vacancy and the appointment of the new pastor were managed by the Church Council under the chairmanship of Günther von Billerbeck. Günther resigned from the chairmanship and left the Council in December. He was thanked for his dedicated service during the Advent afternoon at Lathbury Road, and we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude here.

In the subsequent meeting, a new Chair, Elisabeth von Braunschweig, and Vice-Chair, Lisa von Maasakkers, were elected. The Council further consists of: Lucie Abeler-Dörner (Treasurer and member of the PAB Council), Michaela Scheuermann-Freestone (Synod member), Sandra Hay (responsible for building matters at Lathbury Road), Patricia Zachhuber (responsible for ecumenical relations and contact with our host congregation, St Mary the Virgin), and myself (ex officio).

The Church Council meets monthly, mostly in a hybrid format. We thank the Council for its committed, competent, and fruitful work. It is always desirable to share work and responsibility among many. Therefore, anyone wishing to get involved in parish leadership is most welcome.

3. Church Services

a) Sunday Services Services in Oxford are consistently a source of great joy. Thanks to Alan Pope, we have a wonderful choir that performs regularly, and Bernard Barker accompanies the liturgy with beautiful organ music. Services are well-attended, and it is evident that members enjoy seeing one another. This, in my view, is a vital prerequisite for a welcoming congregation: being a community of people who genuinely like each other.

On 1 February, we held the first service led by our lay preacher, Lucie Abeler-Dörner—I have heard nothing but praise. My thanks go to all who assist with sacristy duties, especially Günther von Billerbeck and his family, and a big thank you to Patricia, who organizes the subsequent socials and ensures that delicious refreshments are provided. We also extend our sincere gratitude to the congregation of St Mary the Virgin for their generous hospitality.

b) Family Church Another popular series of services is the monthly "Family Church." This attracts young parents—predominantly mothers—and their children. Lucie Abeler-Dörner, Annette von Delft, and Patricia Zachhuber provide spiritual and musical inspiration for our youngest members. Thank you for this excellent offering and your dedication. Nothing is more important than familiarizing children with our traditions and making them feel at home within biblical stories.

c) Occasional Offices No occasional services (baptisms, weddings, funerals) have taken place during my current tenure so far.

4. Confirmation Work

Last autumn, a group of teenagers gathered for confirmation classes. Six young people meet monthly on Saturday afternoons at Lathbury Road to discuss faith, the Bible, and the Church. Confirmations will take place on 6 June and 5 July.

This past weekend, we joined the London confirmands for a sleepover at Winfryd House in Whitechapel, a guest house of the German Catholic Parish. Although the trip was demanding—the organizer having underestimated the unpredictability of TfL—a strong sense of community was established. The themes were the life of Jesus, explored through paintings at the National Gallery, and the Eucharist. The evening concluded with a communion service designed by the youth. This is certainly a strong start. My thanks go to the parents for their trust and support, and to Lea Marret Schulz, who accompanied the retreat as an intern.

Another highlight for the youth was the synod-wide "Konfi-Camp" in Cambridge last summer, where approximately 30 young people from across the UK gathered. To quote one participant: "It was actually great."

5. Other Activities

In addition to these regular meetings, weekend events are held for specific target groups (e.g., bowling, linocut) or the whole congregation (e.g., Advent wreath making). We thank everyone who organizes and implements these events with such great investment of time and energy.

6. Pastoral Care

I am still in the process of identifying who in the congregation would appreciate a visit. Some visits have already taken place. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to request a visit. If it proves helpful for organizational purposes, I will offer regular "visiting days" in Oxford.

7. Lathbury Road

The parish house at 15a Lathbury Road is the congregation's most important source of income (see Financial Report), yet it also requires significant work. Sandra Hay manages structural maintenance, while Lucie Abeler-Dörner oversees rentals and related financial aspects.

To make the house even more welcoming, renovations and furniture adjustments are planned for the coming weeks, to be completed by the Easter bonfire. A large portion of our limited storage space is occupied by the archives/files. These will be reviewed and sorted according to current church archival regulations in the coming weeks. If anyone has expertise in this area, professional advice would be very welcome.

The Council has raised inquiries regarding the stability of the copper beech tree in front of the house; this is currently being assessed. The house and its beautiful large garden are a great treasure for the congregation.

8. Networking and Ecumenism

On behalf of the Church Council, Patricia Zachhuber maintains contact with "Churches Together in Central Oxford." She is also in contact with "Oxford City of Sanctuary" (an interfaith initiative supporting refugees) and the CCJ (Council of Christians and Jews).

CTCO has actively supported work with the homeless in the city centre for years. Our congregation supports this work with a financial contribution in addition to our themed collections. Please contact Patricia if you wish to receive invitations to these interesting events. Thank you, Patricia, for your engagement.

9. Cooperation within the PAB London-West

Together with the Christuskirche congregation, our parish manages all organizational matters regarding the pastor’s post. My family and I were fortunate to move into a freshly renovated rectory. I would like to thank the Trust that owns the house, as well as everyone involved in planning and supervising the renovations.

The PAB (Parish Area) has its own Treasurer, Adelheid Schick from London, who manages cross-parish expenses. It is a great support to have Edith Rosenthal as our PAB Secretary; she handles much of the correspondence, ChurchDesk administration, and public relations. Our thanks go to her as well.

10. Public Relations

The congregation is kept informed via various channels: the quarterly parish magazine, the weekly "Westkreuz" newsletter, our frequently updated website, and the parish WhatsApp group and email list managed by Patricia. The magazine, "Westkreuz," and the website are the responsibility of Edith Rosenthal.

Since last year, Anna Böllert has been employed by the Synod to review the public relations of individual congregations and recently provided an initial overview. We will receive advice on where to expand or modify our offerings. The congregation is not currently represented on social media; we must weigh whether the workload is justified, which platforms are suitable, and whether this is a step we wish to take.

11. Outlook

We are still in the season of Lent, but Easter is approaching. There will be an Easter Vigil with a bonfire and an Easter Sunday service. Before that, Lucie Abeler-Dörner will complete her training with her first examination. We wish her God's blessings. As mentioned, we will then have at least two individuals qualified to lead services; we will explore how this can best serve the congregation.

In the coming year, we will certainly address how to further support parish life through an additional position at the PAB level. It is likely that no confirmation group will be formed in Oxford next year. We can look into how this time can be used for the congregation—perhaps a Bible study, a discussion group, or a walking group?

This would fit well with the image of the congregation as the "wandering people of God" (Hebrews 3), living from the Word, engaging in dialogue about faith, and remaining on the move.

To that end, I wish us all God’s blessing.

Oxford, 1 March 2026 **Sebastian Fuhrmann, Pastor**

Deutsche Gemeinde Oxford, 15A Lathbury Road, Oxford OX2 7AT
DeutscheGemeindeOxford@gmail.com

Finanzbericht der Gemeinde Oxford, Jahresabschluss 2025

Die finanzielle Situation der Gemeinde Oxford ist weiterhin gut. Die liquiden Mittel betrugen am Ende des Jahres 2025 inklusive der PAB-Kasse 188593 Pfund. Diese Rücklagen ermöglichen der Gemeinde, das Haus in der Lathbury Road instand zu halten. Gleichzeitig bedeutet dies, dass jederzeit ausreichend Geldmittel zur Verfügung stehen, um neue Initiativen in der Gemeinde zu finanzieren.

2025 betrugen die Einnahmen der Gemeinde 63041 Pfund. Der Großteil des Einkommens bestanden aus Mieteinnahmen für die Wohnungen 15B und 15C Lathbury Road sowie den Gemeindesaal in 15A (48764 Pfund), gefolgt von Mitgliedsbeiträgen (6530 Pfund), einer Unterstützung des Schroder 1905 Trustes vor allem für unsere Kinder- und Jugendarbeit (3494 Pfund) und einer Gift Aid Rückzahlung für mehrere Jahre (3132 Pfund). Für 2026 sind Miet- und Mitgliedsbeitragseinnahmen in ähnlichem Umfang zu erwarten.

Die Ausgaben der Gemeinde betrugen im vergangenen Jahr 67042 Pfund. Dabei entfielen £50902 Pfund auf reguläre Ausgaben und 16140 Pfund auf die Renovierung des Daches in der Lathbury Road. Innerhalb der regulären Ausgaben waren die größten Posten die Mitgliedsbeiträge für Synode und den Pfarramtsbereich (26662 Pfund), der Unterhalt, Instandsetzungsmaßnahmen und Anschaffungen für das Gebäude in der Lathbury Road (15116 Pfund), sowie Kosten für Strom/Gas/Wasser/Reinigung und Council Tax (5650 Pfund). Die regulären Ausgaben waren in diesem Jahr etwa 10000 Pfund höher als in den Jahren zuvor. Das lag vor allem daran, dass wir Mieterwechsel in 15B und 15C hatten und vor allem in 15C erhebliche Renovierungsarbeiten ausgeführt werden mussten, bevor die Wohnung wieder neu vermietet werden konnte.

Weitere Ausgaben im Bereich der Gemeinde entstanden für den Organisten, die Aktivitäten der Familienkirche, neuen Aktivitäten für ältere Kinder (Kanufahren, Bowling, Escape-Room), den Gemeindeausflug nach Coventry und den Joint Carol Service mit der anglikanischen Gemeinde in St Mary's.

Die PAB-Kasse enthielt am Anfang des Jahres anteilig für Oxford 3048 Pfund und am Ende des Jahres 7896 Pfund. Der Überschuss betrug 4848 Pfund.

Insgesamt verzeichnete die Gemeinde 2025 aufgrund der erhöhten Ausgaben einen Überschuss von nur knapp 1000 Pfund. Für 2026 ist wie in den Jahren vor 2025 mit einem Überschuss von etwa 20000 Pfund zu rechnen, sofern keine unvorhergesehenen Ausgaben entstehen.

Die Rücklagen der Gemeinde sollten angesichts der hohen Zinsen gewinnbringender investiert werden. Der KV hat sich von Clemens Lansing, einem KV-Mitglied der Christuskirche beraten

lassen, und wird diese Empfehlungen im nächsten Jahr umsetzten. Clemens berät beruflich Charities bei der Vermögensanlage.

Eine detaillierte Aufstellung aller Einnahmen und Ausgaben findet sich im Jahresabschluss im Anhang.

Die Prüfung des Jahresabschlusses steht noch aus und wird voraussichtlich durch Jochen Hoffmann, den Schatzmeister der Gemeinde in St Albans im April stattfinden.



Lucie Abeler-Dörner
Schatzmeisterin

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A	Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name
German Lutheran Congregation Oxford

On accounts for the year ended	31 December 2025	**Charity no**	286646

Set out on pages 1-2

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

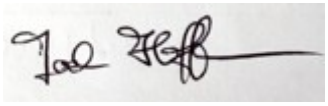
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:		**Date:**	4/8/2026
Name:	Jochen Hoffmann		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	N/A		
Address:	14 Hopground Close, St Albans, AL1 5TA		

Section B Disclosure

R Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose (only complete if applicable)

Charity Name
N/A

Finanübersicht Oxford 2025
alle Zahlen in GBP

Jahr	Haushalt 2025	Abrechnung 2025	Haushalt 2026
Einnahmen	**64,832**	**63,041**	**64,600**
Mitgliedsbeiträge / Spenden	7,500	6,530	7,000
Gift Aid	3,132	3,132	1,500
Mieteinnahmen	51,500	48,762	52,000
Schröder 1905 Trust (KW II Fund)	1,500	3,493	3,000
Zinsen	1,200	1,123	1,100
Erstattungen	0	0	0
Ausgaben	**42,835**	**52,573**	**42,037**
Synode und PAB	26,875	26,662	23,000
Organist	1,400	1,845	1,565
Gottesdienst	600	658	700
Gemeindearbeit	1,400	1,607	1,500
Jugendarbeit	1,200	1,597	1,600
Haus / Garten	8,000	14,507	8,000
Wasser/Strom/Gas/Reinigung/Council Tax	3,000	5,041	5,000
Anschaffungen	300	609	600
Kontogebühren	60	47	72
Sonstige	0	0	0
Außergewöhnliche Ausgaben	**0**	**14469**	**0**
PAB anteilig	**0**	**4,848**	**0**
Kollekte zur Weiterleitung	**0**	**118**	**0**
Überschuss / Defizit	**21,997**	**965**	**22,563**
Vermögen 1. Januar		**187,629**	
Vermögen 31. Dezember		**188,593**	

Weiter Informationen zum Jahresende

German Lutheran congregation Oxford	
Charity number	286646

Anzahl der Gottesdienstteilnehmer	30
Anzahl der Mitglieder	79
Anzahl der erwachsenen Mitglieder	40
Anzahl der Kinder	39
Anzahl der Gemeindebriefbezieher	60

Eigentum	Gemeindehaus
Geschätzter Wert	£2,000,000

Die Jahresabrechnung wurde dem Kirchenvorstand per Email am 23. Februar 2026 vorgelegt.

Die Abrechnung muss noch von einem externen Examiner geprüft werden.

Die Entlastung des Kirchenvorstandes wird in der Gemeindeversammlung am 1. März 2026 stattfinden.

Oxford, 23. Feb 2026

Lucie Abeler-Dörner, Schatzmeisterin

Oxford, 1. März 2026

Seabstian Fuhrmann, Pfarrer