



UNIV

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OXFORD

From the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow

17 August 2023

Dear Undergraduate Fresher,

Congratulations on getting a place at Univ, and best wishes for all your preparations for coming here. We look forward to you joining us and becoming a member of the College.

I am writing now to introduce myself and my role. As Chaplain and Welfare Fellow, I am one of the people with responsibility for promoting student welfare and well being, so you will meet me and other members of the welfare team after you arrive. You are also welcome to get in touch before then if you have any concerns that you might wish to discuss before term starts.

My work may be divided into two broad areas, each of them outside the formal academic and disciplinary structures of the College. First and foremost, quite apart from any 'religious' aspects of my responsibilities, is my welfare and pastoral role. This means that I am one of a number of college officers who is here to try to help all members of the College to flourish, and to whom you are welcome to turn for support should you find yourself at a particular point of need, whether because of issues with your studies, or for any other reason. My aim is to be available and accessible to everyone in Univ, and to offer welcome, support and unconditional acceptance to all members of the College and its staff.

My study is staircase 6 room 6, in Front Quad. I operate an open-door policy, so you can call in if you are passing; there is no need to make an appointment, although of course you are welcome to do so. You are welcome to call in for some cake and tea or coffee, or to talk to me in confidence about any matter that you might wish to discuss. You do not need to be having a crisis to come to see me any more than you need to have any form of religious belief. If something is serious enough to bother you it may be serious enough to raise it with someone else, and I am one of the people whom the College employs to listen to any concerns that you may have. I am paid to be available, so you need not worry that you would be imposing on my time. The College is a very diverse

community, and most of my work takes place in a context of pastoral support in which no assumptions are made as to whether individuals hold to any religious beliefs or to none.

The second part of my role as Chaplain is that I have responsibility for public worship in the College's Chapel, and for working with representatives and members of different faith communities. Univ is an ancient Christian foundation, and its origins and history are the reason why it has a Chapel and a Chaplain. However as a modern and inclusive community we welcome students and staff of all faiths and of none. We have a Muslim prayer room and we try to support students of different faiths, beliefs and traditions in a range of ways. Information about how we do this is in our Handbook of Information and I would encourage you to talk to me if you have suggestions about other ways in which the College might do this.

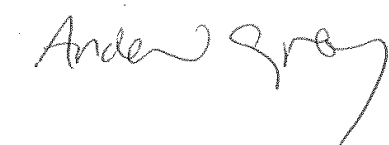
Chapel services are those of the Church of England, and our ethos is welcoming and inclusive. Anyone who wishes to attend or to participate is welcome to do so to the extent that they feel comfortable. Some who worship here are committed Christians, and are glad to make connections between their faith and their studies. But others who come to Chapel would say that they are not religious, that they are agnostic or enquiring, or that they identify with a faith other than Christianity. Some people come simply because they wish to sing, or to listen to the choir. Anyone who wishes to attend is welcome, whatever their reason for coming might be, and students are always welcome to bring guests. More details about services in Chapel, as well as discussion groups, are on the college website, and you're very welcome to raise any questions that you might have about religious faith or other questions about meaning and belief.

Please let me know if you would like to help lead worship in the Chapel and/or join a discussion group, or if you would like me to help you with contact details for representatives or members of a church or faith community in Oxford.

I am also involved in a variety of activities that take place in the College, from the Ball Committee to the Boat Club, and I hope that you too will get involved in some of the many extra-curricular activities that the College offers. I look forward to meeting you when you join us in the autumn and I hope that you will enjoy the rest of the summer.

With warm best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Gregory". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'y'.

Revd Dr Andrew Gregory