



April 21st 2024

The Fourth Sunday of Easter/Good Shepherd Sunday

Dear Friends in Christ,

Those who attended our Annual Parochial Church Meeting last Thursday evening will have heard me announce my retirement from my ministry in November of this year. I will preside for the last time as Vicar of St Helen's and as Team Rector of the Parish on All Saints' Sunday. It has been a healing time for me and I can say whole-heartedly that the past eighteen years have been the most gratifying years of priestly service for me. I thank you all for whatever part you have played in making that so.

As I now begin to close my portfolio of tasks and duties and think through the many plans and decisions that precede retirement, your new Parochial and District Councils, with support and guidance from operatives in the diocese, will begin to plan congregational and parish life through an interregnum. They will need your support for that and I hope that those who are able will also be ready to give that. The time will come for proper 'goodbyes'. In the meantime let's all remember that we earthly priests and shepherds are but passing shadows of the great High Priest and Good Shepherd, the crucified, risen and ascended Lord Jesus. He holds all of us in hand strong hands.

The Good Shepherd

So it's timely that today we mark what's often called 'Good Shepherd Sunday' and hear St John's beautiful, moving description of Jesus as 'the good shepherd' who knows his sheep by name. I take inspiration from that reading in various ways, and its one reason why I say your name when I give you Holy Communion.

Easter Music and Readings at St Helen's

This afternoon we mark the mid-way point through the 'Great Fifty Days' between Easter and Pentecost with a Service of Music & Readings for Eastertide. Our Associate Priest AKMA and our Director of Music Peter Foster have devised a fine service to mark the day with celebratory readings, insightful prayers and inspiring hymns and anthems. Come along and bring a friend!

The Revd Dr Charles Miller, Team Rector

WELCOME to St Helen's on The Fourth Sunday of Easter. 8.00 am *Holy Communion*. 10.30 am *Sung Eucharist*. 5.30 pm *Service of Music and Readings for Eastertide*. The 10.30 am services at St Helen's can be accessed on Zoom from 10.15 am on: Meeting ID: 865 5159 6523; Passcode: 626891.

FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP

Readings: Acts 4:5-12; 1 John 3:16-end; John 10:11-18.

Service Setting: Archer, Lincoln setting

Hymns:

Processional Te Deum: Holy God, we praise your name

Gradual: 140 Christ is alive

Offertory: 612 We have a gospel to proclaim

Anthem: Jacob, arr. Brother James's air

Post communion: SP 283 I will sing the wondrous story

Collect: Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm: 23

Response: The Lord is my shepherd there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd:

therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures:

and leads me beside still waters. **Response**

He shall refresh my soul:

and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil; for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Response

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me:

you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. **Response**

THE COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

WEEKDAYS 9.10 am *Morning Prayer* in church.

ON MONDAY 9.30 am *Baby and Toddler Group* in the Parish Centre Hall. 12pm *Mothers' Union Service* in the church. 7pm *Passion Play Rehearsal* in the church.

ON TUESDAY 6 pm *Agnostics Anonymous Discussion Group* in the Parish Centre Hall.

ON WEDNESDAY 10.30 am *Holy Communion* in the church.

ON SUNDAY 8 am *Holy Communion*. 10.30 am *Sung Eucharist*. 5.30 pm *Service for Healing and Wholeness*.

PROGRAMMES, EVENTS & NOTICES

The next meeting of the Agnostics Anonymous open discussion group will be held on Tuesday 23rd April from 6 pm - 7.30 pm in the Parish Centre. FREE and EVERYONE WELCOME. For more information call Jill Gant 01235 528929.

Date for your diary: On Saturday 27th April 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm, St Michael's Church will be hosting the first Cream Tea of the summer season with live music. Tea/coffee with scone/cake £5. Proceeds to church funds. All welcome.

St Helen's@lunch. Midday Thursday 18th July at Chilton Garden Centre. If you need or can offer a lift, please contact Susan Scott, 01235 522960.

Silent Reflections will be held on Tuesday 30th April at 7.30 pm at St Michael's beginning in the church room. **Moving into Stillness:** circle dancing to Taizé music with silent interludes on Thursday 2nd May in the church from 9.45 – 10.45 am before the regular circle dancing session at 11 am (now on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month only).

Faith Forum: The final Faith Forum in the current series will be on Sunday 5th May in the Parish Centre. A buffet lunch will be served from 12.30pm, with the talk beginning at 12.45pm. Our speaker will be Revd Ruth Fitter, NHS chaplain. Ruth will be speaking to us about the sacraments and healing. Those unable to attend in person will be able to join us via Zoom (link to be provided nearer the day). We'd also like to receive feedback on the new timing of Faith Forum - if you would like to share your thoughts on this. Has it made it easier for you to attend or is the time less convenient? How have you found the refreshments/hospitality? Do you think it does/doesn't work well in its new lunchtime slot? Please contact Jen Brown, either by email (jennifer.brown@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk), leaving a note in the Parish Office, or having a quick word after a service.

Mothers' Union Tea. On Tuesday, 7th May at 3 pm at Cosener's House , £9.50. If members of the congregation would like to join us, you would be most welcome. Please contact Elizabeth Dawson or Jenny Morris to make your payment and book a place. Tel: Jenny, 525576 or Elizabeth, 526415.

Christians and Muslims in a fractured world: This is the title of our FoSH meeting on Wednesday 15th May at 7.30 pm. It will be led by Dr Richard McCallum, Director of the Centre for Muslim-Christian Studies in Oxford. Please note that it will be held at St

Nicolas' Church, not St Helen's. All are welcome, and we look forward to a stimulating evening addressing this very topical issue.

Would you like to be a wedding verger? It's a joyful ministry and full training will be given. Please speak with Fiona Tonks or email wedcoord@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk if you are interested.

Do download and read the April magazine if you haven't yet! The May issue will be published on Sunday 5th May. Contributions and comments by the end of Sunday 28th April to candle@abingdonparish.org.uk.

Please pray for the residents of Francis Little Drive, Gainsborough Green, Godfrey Close and Golafre Road. Intercessory prayer requests contact clairebolton@googlemail.com.

For health & wellbeing: Doris Winter, Loelia Lyon, John and Jeanne Wesson, Mary Barton, David Wickens, Sarah Stevens, Ron Moss, Emma and her mother Bec, Katie Stuart, Alli and David.

Next week's readings: Acts 8.26-end; 1 John 4.7-end; John 15.1-8.

For your thoughts and prayers:

O GOD of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favourably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Charles Miller
Team Vicar	The Revd Paul Smith
Associate Priest	The Revd Dr Andrew Adam (AKMA)
Associate Priest	The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown
Wardens	Mrs Linda Hobbs and Mr David Pope
Director of Music	Dr Peter Foster
Assistant Organist	Mr Andrew Shouler
Parish Administrator	Mrs Jackie Cunningham
Caretaker	Mr Robin Day

The Parish office is open Monday – Thursday, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm (closed on Fridays).

Phone: 01235 520144

E-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk; Website: abingdonparish.org.uk/StH

A copy of this Newsletter is posted regularly on our website.