



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 8th March 2026

The Third Sunday of Lent

"But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?" Job 28:12
(Answer at the end)

A Team Vicar for Abingdon-on-Thames

It all began with a meeting, in January. A meeting of minds who could be there from the congregants of our three churches. Rector Jen ably led us to ponder, reflect upon and - in Anglican techno-speak - "discern" what God wants and what we want in a new Team Vicar for our Parish. The meeting began and ended, encouragingly, with a prayer. That gave me the first clue to the answer to poor old Job's question above.

The parish profile, previously published to attract our new Rector, was dusted off next. Several more meetings, this time of the PCC - all helpfully begun and ended with prayers - followed, in which every full stop, Oxford comma, misaligned bullet point, textual and image improvement was carefully and prayerfully scrutinised: all in search of wisdom to discern and attract the "right" person for the job.

Version 14 of the parish profile now resides with the diocese, together with the wording of the advert and another piece of text called the person profile. This trinity of materials will constitute our offer, to be advertised far and wide after Easter, to whomsoever the Spirit will prompt, we pray, to apply for this important post. We hope to have candidates to interview in June, and the interview panel will summon representatives from all three churches, the Rector, the Bishop, the Archdeacon and representatives of the Deanery.

However daunting this extended panel may appear to our candidate(s), I remain convinced that if they and we keep talking to the Almighty about the process and the appointment, He will provide us with comfort when we are scared, as well as the right person as our Team Vicar, in His wisdom. Please keep up your prayers! After all, even Job discerned the right answer in the end, when God replied to him:

"Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; (and to depart from evil is understanding.)"

Job 28:28 (my brackets)

David Pope, Churchwarden at St Helen's (with thanks to Eluned Hallas, Churchwarden at St Nicolas')

WELCOME to St Helen's this Sunday. 10.30 am *Sung Eucharist*. 5.30 pm *Taizé Prayer*. The 10.30 am service at St Helen's today can be accessed on Zoom from 10.15 am on: Meeting ID: 865 5159 6523; Passcode: 626891.

FOR TODAY'S SERVICE

Readings: Exodus 17.1-7; Romans 5.1-11; John 4.5-42

Service Setting: Bell, Celtic Saints setting

Hymns:

Processional: 435 Glorious things of thee are spoken

Gradual: 455 Guide my O thou great redeemer

Offertory: 565 Rock of ages

Anthem: Stainer, God so loved the world

Post Communion: 480 In the cross of Christ I glory

Collect:

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Psalm: 95

Response: O come let us sing to the Lord. Let us heartily rejoice in the rock of his salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving:

and be glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God

and a great king above all gods. **Response**

In his hand are the depths of the earth

and the heights of the mountains are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it,

and his hands have moulded the dry land. **Response**

Come let us worship and bow down

and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God;

we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. **Response**

THE COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

ON WEEKDAYS 9.10 am *Morning Prayer*.

ON MONDAY 9.30 am *Baby and Toddler Group* in the Parish Centre Hall. 7.00 pm *Circle Dancing* in the Parish Centre Hall.

ON TUESDAY 2.15 pm *Desiring Life Group* in the Parish Centre Lounge. 5.00 pm *Yellow Submarine Group* in the Parish Centre Hall.

ON WEDNESDAY 10.30 am *Holy Communion*. 2.30 pm *Mothers' Union Committee Meeting* in the Parish Centre Hall. 7.00 pm *Marriage Preparation Class* in the Parish Centre Lounge.

ON THURSDAY 6.30 pm *Life Drawing Class* in the Parish Centre Hall.

ON FRIDAY 4.00 pm *Abingdon School Bell Club* in the church. 5.00 pm *Young Ringer's Practice* in the church. 5.30 pm *Choir Practice* in the church.

ON SUNDAY. 10.30 am *Sung Eucharist*. 5.30 pm *Choral Evensong*.

PROGRAMMES, EVENTS & NOTICES

Abingdon Artists' Spring Exhibition takes place in the South Aisle of St Helen's Church from Mon 9th to Sat 14th March, 10 am to 4.30 pm each day. With over 100 pictures on display it's well worth a look and it's also an opportunity to buy cards and unframed work.

It is likely that over 700 people will pass through the church that week so if anyone has a spare hour when they could steward at our Welcome/Shop area, please do so. There will always be 3 Artist stewards in the church during the exhibition so you will never be on your own.

Posies for Mothering Sunday. As is customary, posies will be distributed during the 10.30 am service next Sunday, 15th March. If you are able to make a posy, please bring it to church and place it in the baptistery. Thank you.

StHelens@lunch - Tuesday 17th March at Root One Garden Centre, near Wallingford, OX10 0PT, at 12.30 pm. If you need or can offer a lift contact Susan Scott, 01235 522960.

Abingdon School are holding a concert in St Michael's on Friday 20th March at 7.00 pm entitled 'Gerald Finzi: An Anniversary Concert'. Admission is free, although booking is encouraged via Abingdon School's website.

Open Church Stewarding. It is now just a few weeks to the start of our Summer Stewarding of the church. Last year we had only ten regular stewards and were unable to fulfil our hopes of being able to have a welcoming presence every morning of the week. If you have been thinking this is something you could do to support the outreach of St Helen's church family but would like to know more before committing yourself, please talk to me, Elizabeth Simpson, after the service, or email me on simpsonem123@gmail.com. Please do think about this. With thanks.

For your thoughts and prayers:

- We thank God for the ways in which we can support our church - with our skills, our time, our friendship, our money.
- We remember those who are in need of support, who face financial challenges, who feel alone in the world.
- We ask that our eyes may be opened to ways in which we, as a church, can move to help those who are in need.

Please pray for the residents of Stanford Drive, Stenton Close, Stert Street, Stevenson Drive.

Intercessory prayer requests to clairembolton@googlemail.com.

For health, consolation & wellbeing: Sarah Stevens, Katie Stuart, Alli, David, Anne Smithson, Loelia Lyon, Vanessa Madden.

Next week's readings: Exodus 2.1-10; Colossians 3.12-17; John 19.25b-27

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown jennifer.brown@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk
Team Vicar	Vacant
Associate Priest	The Revd Dr A. K. M. Adam (AKMA) akma@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk
Wardens	Ms Margaret Horton and Mr David Pope
Director of Music	Dr Peter Foster
Assistant Organist	Mr Andrew Shouler
Parish Administrator	Mrs Jackie Cunningham
Caretaker	Mr Robin Day
Parish Safeguarding	Mrs Pat Hudson safeguarding@abingdonparish.org.uk
St Helen's Safeguarding	Mr Emmanuel Chukwuma

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

Phone: 01235 520144. Checked on Fridays, morning and afternoon.

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

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