



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 22nd March 2026

The Fifth Sunday of Lent **Passion Sunday**

We often talk about Lent as a journey. It's not usually a physical journey. Sometimes we focus on following the story of Jesus' and his disciples' travels through Galilee and Judea: the people he met, the stories he told, and with this story, our own journey of discipleship. Sometimes we find ourselves on a spiritual journey towards the crisis of the last week of Jesus' life in Jerusalem, his death, and then looking ahead to the resurrection. Sometimes life intervenes and we have to trust that the Sunday readings and worship will take us on the journey towards Holy Week however spiritually empty we are feeling. But whichever of these is your experience this year, this Sunday, sometimes known as Passion Sunday is the point at which the pace and mood of our worship shifts and we find ourselves at that point of a journey where we can see, or at least, catch a glimpse, of what lies ahead. We are not quite at Holy Week yet, but our hymns and the words of our worship are all pointing in that direction.

I discovered another, real, physical journey being undertaken this week. Our new Archbishop is making her own journey to Canterbury on foot this week (she started last Tuesday), following the ancient pilgrims' route from London. If all goes to plan, she will arrive in Canterbury in time for Evensong this Sunday, and then prepare for the service of installation on Wednesday. In our world, where too many leaders seem to be relying on the power of money and violence and entitlement to force their wishes on others, a journey which relies on simply putting one foot in front of another, and in doing so, also allows time to meet and listen to a range of other people, is an important sign of what we believe matters to God .

Archbishop Sarah has said: "As I walk this path I will be praying for our Church and our world, and asking God to bless those we meet. Every Christian life is a pilgrimage - a journey with God."

As we continue towards Holy Week, we pray for Archbishop Sarah, and also for our own journeys with God this year.

Rosalind Rutherford

WELCOME to St Helen's this Sunday. 10.30 am *Sung Eucharist*. 5.30: *Healing and Wholeness*. 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.

Faith Forum meets this Sunday, 22nd March, in the parish centre. Lunch will be served from 12.20pm and the talk will begin at 12.45pm. We will be continuing our series on the liturgy. Our rector, Jen Brown, will speak on 'Posture and movement in the liturgy.' The talk can be accessed on [Zoom](#) from 12.30pm on: Meeting ID: 856 4563 3324; Passcode: 656494.

FOR TODAY'S SERVICE

Readings: Ezekiel 37.1-14; Romans 8.6-11; John 11.1-45

Service Setting: Bell, Celtic Saints setting.

Hymns:

Processional: 125 We sing the praise of him who died
Gradual: 421 Father of heaven, whose love profound
Offertory: 109 It is a thing most wonderful
Anthem: Bruckner, Christus factus est
Post Communion 117 O love divine, what hast thou done

Collect: Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; 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: 130

Response: Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord

Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice;
Let your ears consider well
The voice of my supplication **Response**

If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you,
So that you shall be feared. **Response**

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
In his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord,
More than the night watch for the morning,
More than the night watch for the morning. **Response**

O Israel, wait for the Lord,
For with the Lord there is mercy;

With him is plenteous redemption
And he shall redeem Israel from all their sins **Response**

5.30 PM SERVICE OF HEALING AND WHOLESNESS

Readings: Lamentations 3.19-33
Hymns: Jesu lover of my soul (CP 96)
Have faith in God my heart (CP 458)
Great is thy faithfulness (CP 453)

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.

ON TUESDAY 6.00 pm *Agnostics Anonymous* meeting in the Parish Centre Hall

ON WEDNESDAY 10.30 am *Holy Communion*.

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

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

ON SUNDAY 10.30 am *Sung Eucharist*.

PROGRAMMES, EVENTS & NOTICES

Easter lilies. If you would like to give a donation towards Easter lilies to decorate the church in memory of a loved one, please hand the name and donation in the envelopes available in church to the parish office by Friday 27th March.

We plan to have the Easter Garden in the West Porch during Holy Week, and as usual, will need a rota of volunteers to welcome those who pass and give out information about the Easter services. A rota to volunteer will be on the noticeboard so please sign for a time you can offer.

Silent Reflections will be held on Tuesday 24th March at 7.30-8.30 pm at St Michael and All Angels. Sue Scott will provide material for our reflections. We meet initially in the church room. Parking permits are available for use in Park Road.

THE PASSION by The LAMPS Collective, as broadcast on Premier Christian radio, is on tour for the ninth year this year, with a performance in Radley and two performances in Oxford. This hugely powerful and highly accessible show looks at the events leading up to the first Easter and is ideal to invite non church-going friends to in the lead up to Easter. For more information visit the LAMPS Collective website, <https://lampscollective.com/>.

Church Twinning. Our friends in Schongau, Germany, have invited us, together with a group from St Niklaas, Belgium, for a Church Twinning weekend from 4th to 8th June

2026. Accommodation will be with host families. If you are interested, please contact Elizabeth on simpsonem123@gmail.com for further information by 1st April, as places are very limited.

Moving into Stillness: circle dancing to Taizé chants with silent interludes at St Michael and All Angels on Thursday 9th April in the church from 9.45 – 10.45 am before the regular circle dancing session at 11 am with the second regular circle dancing session of the month being held on 23rd April. Elizabeth Mitchell will be the teacher. No prior experience/partner needed. Tea and coffee will be provided between the two sessions. Parking permits are available for use in Park Road. **Please note the changes of date and room for April.**

Open Church Stewarding. It is now just a few weeks to the start of our Summer Stewarding of the church. If you have been thinking this is something you could do to support the outreach of St Helen's church family please talk to me, Elizabeth Simpson, after the service, or email me on simpsonem123@gmail.com. With thanks.

The March Issue of the Parish Magazine is now available to download from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php. Lots of good Lenten reading and, of course, pictures and a puzzle. Oh, and a cartoon.

Holy Week and Easter publicity leaflets giving information about the services during Holy Week and Easter across the parish are now available in church. Please take one for your own reference, and some for neighbours, family and friends.

The telephone in the Parish Centre Office is still out of order due to issues at the local exchange. We are expecting the issue to be resolved by 16th March. If you need to contact the office, please do so by email at: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk. Apologies for the inconvenience.

Electoral Roll revision We are formally revising the Parish Electoral Roll between 19th March and 2nd April 2026, and hope anyone not already on our register who worships with us will help us by joining the roll. You need to be on the Electoral Roll to be able to vote at Annual Church Meetings and to be eligible for election to office. A lay person can be added to the parish roll if they satisfy some simple conditions. Forms are available from Kate Burland, in the Parish Office or on the website. Please return forms to Kate in church or to the Parish Office.

From Elizabeth S. Thank you all so much for giving me such a wonderful start to my big birthday week. Thank you to Linda, for a beautiful birthday cake, and thank you all for the many cards and good wishes I received. I was so happy to be able to share it with you. I was lost for words!

For your thoughts and prayers:

- For Christian communities entering Passiontide surrounded by death and destruction particularly the Christian communities in Iran, Palestine and across the Middle East.
- For St Georges College in Jerusalem
- For Archbishop Sarah, to be installed in Canterbury Cathedral on Wednesday, for grace and strength as she takes up this role, and for her to be blessed as she follows your call.
- For each one of us as we journey in different ways towards Holy Week

Please pray for the residents of Sympson Close, Tannery Court, Tennyson Drive, Thames Street. 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: Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11; Matthew 26.14-end ch.27 10-12

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	Vacant
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.

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR POSITION

The Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames is seeking a new parish administrator. The administrator is the senior administrative position for the three churches in the parish. Working closely with the Rector, ministry team, and church wardens, the successful applicant will manage the parish office, handle bookings for the three churches and parish centre, be the first point of contact for people seeking baptisms, funerals, and weddings, as well as handling general enquiries made to the office, among other tasks. The post requires a variety of skills, notably organisational ability, computer literacy, and good interpersonal skills to interact with clergy, other staff, volunteers, and the congregations of the churches. The post is initially 27 hours each week, over 4.5 days, with the potential to grow; salary £13.45 per hour. For further information, please contact the Rector:

rector@abingdonparish.org.uk.

To apply: Please send CV and covering letter explaining your reasons for interest in the position and qualifications to rector@abingdonparish.org.uk.