



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 29th March 2026

Palm Sunday

On Palm Sunday we start the journey of Holy Week, travelling with Jesus and his disciples into Jerusalem and to the cross. This is about more than just remembering or commemorating, and it is more than re-enacting. When we wave our palm branches or palm crosses to acclaim the arrival of Jesus, when we hear different voices reading the passion gospel and picture the scenes unfolding before us, we step into the story and claim our place within it.

Taking our place in the story matters. It reminds us that our faith isn't something abstract and ephemeral. It is based on historical events that, although they happened some 2000 years ago, are still available to us. Taking our place in the story also helps us to realise that this story isn't just in the past. The life of Jesus continues in us.

It isn't just on Palm Sunday that we enter into the story of Jesus. We do this at every Eucharist – every time we recall and re-enact and re-live the Last Supper, we take our place at the table. In every Eucharist, we join the ongoing feast of heaven. Our joining into the story breaks down the barriers between past, present, and future, and between heaven and earth.

On this Palm Sunday, and in the days of Holy Week, we walk with Jesus and his disciples as they make their way to the upper room, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the cross. We aren't just observers. We, Jesus' disciples in our age, are participants in the story of Jesus and his ministry as it continues to unfold in the world today.

Revd Dr Jen Brown, Rector

WELCOME to St Helen's this Sunday. 10.30 am *Outdoor Palm Liturgy, Procession and Sung Eucharist*. 5.30 pm *Sacred Concert for Passiontide*. 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: Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11; Matthew 26.14-end ch.27 10-12

Service Setting: Bell, Celtic Saints setting.

Hymns:

Processional: 499 Lift high the cross; 128, All Glory laud and honour

Gradual 129 Ride on ride on in majesty

Offertory: 279 And now, O Father, mindful of the love

Anthem. Ives, Ride on

Post communion: 118 O love how deep, how broad how high

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility; and also be made partakers of his resurrection; 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.**

Psalms: 31 Response: Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord.

Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am in trouble;

my eye is consumed with sorrow, my soul and my body also.

For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing;

My strength fails me because of my affliction, and my bones are consumed. **Response**

I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbours,

An object of dread to my acquaintances; when they see me in the street they flee from me.

I am forgotten like one that is dead, out of mind;

I have become like a broken vessel.

Response

For I have heard the whispering of the crowd;

fear is on every side;

they scheme together against me, and plot to take my life.

But my trust is in you, O Lord. I have said, 'You are my God.'

Response

'My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies,

And from those who persecute me.

Make your face to shine upon your servant,

And save me for your mercy's sake.'

Response

THE COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

ON WEEKDAYS 9.10 am *Morning Prayer*.

ON MONDAY 10.00-11.00am Help make the Easter Garden see note below. 08.00-9.00pm *Compline with Address*

ON TUESDAY 5.00pm *Yellow Submarine Group* in the Parish Centre Hall. 08.00-9.00pm *Compline with Address*

ON WEDNESDAY 10.30am *Holy Communion*. 08.00-9.00pm *Compline with Address*

ON THURSDAY 7.30pm At St Michael & All Angels: *Parish Eucharist with Washing of Feet, Stripping of the Altar and Watch of the Passion until 10.00pm ending with Compline*. (Spend as long or as little time at the Watch as you feel able.)

ON FRIDAY 2.00-3.00pm *Liturgy of Good Friday*. 4.00pm *Abingdon School Bell Club* in the church. 5.00pm *Young Ringers Practice* in the church. 5.30pm *Choir Practice* in the church. 8.00pm *Outdoor Stations of the Cross*

ON SATURDAY 9.10am *Morning Prayer for Holy Saturday*. 8.00pm *Lighting of the Fire, Vigil and Renewal of Baptismal Vows*

ON SUNDAY 8.00am *Holy Communion (1662) with hymns*. 10.30am *Sung Eucharist for Easter with all-age address* (followed by Easter Egg Hunt)

PROGRAMMES, EVENTS & NOTICES

Monday, 30th March Easter Garden. Children, with an adult, are invited to help make the Easter Garden between 10.00 and 11.00 am in church. Drop in to help, and make your own Easter garden. **The garden will then be displayed in the West Porch during Holy Week.** As usual, we 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.

The April edition of the Parish Magazine will be published on Easter Day, April 5th. Do send comments or contributions! We need to have these by the end of Palm Sunday to candle@abingdonparish.org.uk

A concert of Celtic music, including songs and music for guitar, violin and tin whistle, will be given by professional singer, Valentine Roland, on **Sat 18th April at 7.30pm in St Helen's Church**. Tickets are £10 (under 16 free) and are available online at Ticketsource, from the Bookstore, in church after the 10.30 service and at the door. The church is 'promoting' this concert and will receive half the net proceeds, so do come and support Valentine and the church. "

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/>.

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.**

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.

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 shortly. 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:

- Christians throughout the world beginning the journey of Holy Week
- Those preparing to enter the life and story of Christ through baptism and confirmation
- Those who speak the truth and work to end injustice and oppression
- Those who are walking the difficult road of rejection and ridicule
- Those who are facing death and those who grieve
- The world for which Christ died

Please pray for the residents of Thames View, The Charter, The Holt and The Hyde.
Intercessory prayer requests to clairebolton@googlemail.com.

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

Next week's readings: Acts 10:34-43; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-8

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown rector@abingdonparish.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](mailto:rector@abingdonparish.org).

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

It's nomination and election time!

The St. Helen's Annual District Church Meeting (the ADCM) will be held on Sunday 19th April, in church after the 10.30 service. This is when we elect Wardens, Pro-wardens, members of the Parish Church Council, Deanery Synod and the District Church Council. These are all important posts/councils in the running of St Helen's and the parish, and we need people to step up to the job. It's a great way to get involved in church life, to get to know others both in St Helen's and across the parish. With, we hope, the appointment of a Team Vicar in June it will be a time of new beginnings and ways of working across the parish - a great time to get involved in church planning.

If you would like to stand for any of these posts, please add your name to the lists on the Welcome desk, and ask someone to propose and second you.