



St HELEN'S CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 16th & 23rd August 2026

Blessed Virgin Mary & Saints / Trinity 12

In our baptismal liturgy as set forth in *Common Worship*, those who come forward for baptism affirm their faith in God the Father, in Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, *and* in 'the communion of saints.' We observe particular days to honour saints, and we especially devote several different days to honouring the Blessed Virgin Mary. It's moderately clear why one would affirm faith in the Triune God — but less clear why we expect our new siblings to *believe in* the communion of saints.

Although most of our Bibles include references to 'saints', Scripture doesn't use the term in the formal way that the Church has come to define it. The words in question, in Hebrew and Greek, can be understood without loss or confusion as 'holy ones', 'holy people'. Thus, the Book of Common Prayer's version of Psalm 31:26 reads 'O love the Lord, all ye his *saints*', where the Hebrew reads 'all you his *faithful*' in one translation, or 'his godly ones' or 'pious ones' (and the Old Greek gives 'pious' or 'holy'). Paul addresses the recipients of his letters as 'the saints', in Rome, or Corinth, or Philippi — but again, it would be more strictly appropriate just to say 'the *holy ones*', church members such as you or I.

As the church grew, people felt it right that *some* holy people were of such importance, or such intense holiness, that they should have 'Holy' as a title: 'Holy John', 'Holy Mary Magdalene', and especially 'Holy Mary', Jesus's mother. Since Latin was the language to the Western Church, we referred to these holy ones as *Sanctus Petrus* or *Sancta Maria*, and the Latin *Sanct-* became the English 'Saint'.

We believe in them *at least* to the extent that they show us aspects of what faithfulness to God looks like: perhaps remaining steadfast to the point of martyrdom, or giving so generously that they impoverish themselves to help their neighbours, or exercising leadership with inspired humility and wisdom. The Catholic tradition believes that the most intensely holy already live in the presence of God, so that we may prompt them to pray for us (in the Litany of the Saints, we call upon them, singing 'Saint Helen / Pray for us', 'Saint Nicolas / Pray for us', 'St Michael / Pray for us'. Whether asking their prayers, or modelling our lives on their example, we believe and trust in the communion of saints.

AKMA

WELCOME to St Helen's for the 16th and 23rd August. 10.30am *Sung Eucharist*.
The 10.30am services at St Helen's can be accessed on Zoom from 10.15am on:
Meeting ID: 865 5159 6523; Passcode: 626891.

The 8am Sunday Holy Communion service will be at St NICOLAS Church until further notice. **There are no evening services in St Helen's in August**

FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAY 16th AUGUST

Readings: Isaiah 61.10-end; Galatians 4.4-7; Luke 1.46-55

Service Setting: Archer, Lincoln setting

Hymns

Processional: 230 Ye watchers and ye holy ones

Gradual: 244 Virgin-born we bow before thee

Offertory: 238 For Mary, mother of our Lord

Communion hymn: SP218 Jesus calls us here to meet him

Post communion: 362 Tell out my soul

Collect: Almighty God, who looked upon the lowliness of the Blessed Virgin Mary and chose her to be the mother of your only Son: grant that we who are redeemed by his blood may share with her in the glory of your eternal kingdom; 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 45 v6-9 Response: The peoples shall praise you for ever.

Hear, O daughter; consider and incline your ear;
forget your own people and your father's house.
So shall the king have pleasure in your beauty;
he is your lord, so do him honour.

Response

The people of Tyre shall bring you gifts;
the richest of the people shall seek your favour.
The king's daughter is all glorious within;
her clothing is embroidered cloth of gold.

Response

She shall be brought to the king in raiment of needlework;
after her the virgins that are her companions.
With joy and gladness shall they be brought
and enter into the palace of the king.

Response

'Instead of your fathers you shall have sons,
whom you shall make princes over all the land.
'I will make your name to be remembered through all generations;
therefore shall the peoples praise you for ever and ever.' **Response**

FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAY 23rd AUGUST

Readings: Isaiah 51.1-6; Romans 12.1-8; Matthew 16.13-20

Service Setting: Archer, Lincoln setting

Hymns

Processional: 208ii Christ is made the sure foundation

Gradual: 426 Firmly I believe and truly

Offertory: 585 The church's one foundation

Communion hymn: SP211 Before I take the body of my Lord

Post communion: 236 Thou art the Christ, O God

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Psalms 138 Response: Great is the glory of the Lord.

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods will I sing praise to you.
I will bow down towards your holy temple and praise your name,
because of your love and faithfulness;
for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.
In the day that I called to you, you answered me;
you put new strength in my soul.

Response

All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord,
for they have heard the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
that great is the glory of the Lord.
Though the Lord be high, he watches over the lowly;
as for the proud, he regards them from afar.

Response

Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you will preserve me;
you will stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies;
your right hand will save me.
The Lord shall make good his purpose for me;
your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever;
forsake not the work of your hands.

Response

Intercessory prayer requests to clairembolton@googlemail.com.

For prayer:

- For all the holy people of God, particularly for those whom we know, who from their labours rest
- For that spirit of saintliness that cleanses our hearts, raises our aspirations to heaven, and blesses all around us
- For models of faith and integrity whose lives encourage us ever to pursue ways that draw us closer to God
- For eyes to see and ears to hear the presence of sanctity in the world around us, and always to support and amplify it

Prayer for Rain:

O God, heavenly Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all them that seek thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, all things necessary to their bodily sustenance: Send us, we beseech thee, in this our necessity, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth to our comfort, and to thy honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please pray for the residents of Caledcott Road, Causeway, Cemetery Road, Challenor Close, Chaunterall Way, Checker Walk, Clifton Drive, Coleridge Drive.

For health, consolation & wellbeing: Annelise Dennis, Vanessa Madden, Ann and Ron Moss, Anne Smithson, Sarah Stevens, Katie Stuart, Alli

Readings for Sunday 30th August: Jeremiah 15.15-21; Romans 12.9-end; Matthew 16.21-end.

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown rector@abingdonparish.org.uk
Team Vicar	(To join the parish after Christmas)
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 Kate Burland
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 on our website.

Sunday 16th & 23rd August 2026: PROGRAMMES, EVENTS & NOTICES:

This is the second double newsletter, covering 16th & 23rd August. The next newsletter will be Sunday 30th August. The deadline for entries for is 25th August.

THE NEXT TWO WEEKS AT ST HELEN'S

ON WEEKDAYS	9.10am Morning Prayer
ON MONDAY	1.45-2.45pm <i>Volunteer Group</i> in the office (17 th) 1.00pm <i>Wedding</i> in the church (24 th)
ON TUESDAY	7.30-9.00pm <i>Bell ringing</i> in the tower (18 th) 2.00pm <i>Funeral</i> in the church (25 th)
ON WEDNESDAY	10.30am Holy Communion
ON THURSDAY	6.15-8.00pm <i>Private booking</i> in the hall
ON FRIDAY	5.00pm <i>Young Ringers Practice</i> in the church
ON SATURDAY	
ON SUNDAY	10.30am Sung Eucharist 1.00pm: <i>Baptism</i> in the church (23 rd) 3.00pm <i>Wedding Rehearsal</i> in the church (23 rd)

*The 8am Sunday Holy Communion service will be at St NICOLAS Church until further notice. **There are no evening services in St Helen's in August***

Brian Smith, RIP We were sorry to learn of the death of Brian Smith, husband of Rosemary. We give thanks for his life and send our condolences to Rosemary.

The funeral of **Tony Richmond** will take place on **Tuesday 18th August at 2pm** at St Nicolas church

The funeral of **Jennifer Berrell** will take place on **Wednesday 19th August at 2.30pm** at St Nicolas church

The funeral of **Tony Grealy** will take place on **Tuesday 25th August at 2pm** at St Helen's church. We hope to serve tea and cake in the south aisle afterwards: offers to help with serving or bakes to Linda Hobbs, please.

We may be able to include brief memories and appreciations of Tony within the service: please give any you have to Linda, David Bevington or the parish office.

We rejoice with Rachel Butler & Ted Smith to be married on **Saturday 24th August** in St Helen's church

St Michael's Cream Tea, Saturday 29th August 2.30-4.30pm at St Michael's church. Bring your family and friends for some delicious cakes and music. £5 per tea.

Huw Rhys James Piano Recital, Sunday 6th September 3.00pm at St Michael's church. Huw & family regularly attend St Michael's when in the UK. Tickets £15.

Ride+ Stride, Saturday 12th September 10.00am–5.00pm. This annual event raises funds for Historic Churches through sponsorship of cyclists & walkers to as many or as few churches as you like. St Helen's has benefitted from this in previous years. Full details and sponsor forms are available from www.ohct.org.uk

***Help needed at St Helen's *** There is a sign-up sheet on the noticeboard at the back of the church if you can give an hour to greet and sign in the Ride and Striders from all over a wide local area. With thanks, Elizabeth Simpson and Alexandra Green

Homegroups update Alan Green is proposing to start a new evening Homegroup on Mondays. This is in addition to the afternoon group that is being organised by Cathy Green and Norman Gee. If you are interested in the evening group, please speak to Alan after a morning service or email alan.green40@gmail.com

Confirmation and admission to Holy Communion: This notice is to ask that if you or your child would be interested in confirmation, please speak to Revd Jen or Fr AKMA so that we can begin to plan confirmation classes. We can also offer preparation for admission to Holy Communion if there are any children who would like to begin receiving Holy Communion prior to confirmation.

The Revd Naomi Gardom Subject to legalities, the Revd Naomi Gardom has been appointed as the next Team Vicar in the Abingdon-on-Thames team. Naomi will join the Abingdon-on-Thames team from the University Church in Oxford where she is currently serving her curacy. Naomi's licensing will be on **Wednesday 6th January 2027** at 7.30pm in St Helen's Church.

Foodbank: Your ongoing support is much appreciated, and the foodbank currently needs corned beef, tinned fruit, tinned ham, sunflower oil, instant coffee and biscuits as well as laundry pods, soap, toilet rolls, shampoo, suncream and carrier bags. Thank you very much.

A Candle in the Window The **July edition** of the Parish Magazine is available to download from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php A green edition! No more until September!

CiA News The **August** issue of CiA News is now available to download and there are copies in church. A digital copy is available to download from the parish web site: https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_communications.html

PATHWAYS Printed copies of the Summer 2026 issue of the Diocese of Oxford magazine are available in church.