



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 13th September 2026

Holy Cross

The Power of the Cross

Today we celebrate Holy Cross Day. Because St Helen is believed to have discovered the true cross on her pilgrimage to the Holy Land, St Helen's keeps Holy Cross Day as the church's patronal festival.

Although it wasn't always, the cross has become the most widely recognised visual symbol of Christianity (and it may be St Helen that we have to thank for that). The cross provides a powerful visual image – a reminder of the horrific death that Jesus suffered, and the cruelty that human society and human sin can inflict, especially when those in power feel threatened. It can also be a helpful visual aid for thinking about prayer, the Church, and our relationship with God. The image of the cross can be helpful in prayer, as it gives a focus; people can imagine laying down burdens at the foot of the cross, or standing at the foot of the cross and looking up, towards God. Some use the shape of the cross as a reminder of the relationships that exist within the Church: the vertical – between us and God, and the horizontal – our relationships with each other. The cross is also a reminder of God's love, the arms of the cross representing God's arms opened wide, ready to embrace all that God made and loves.

The cross is a reminder that ours is a subversive faith! Not only was Jesus crucified as a usurper, the 'King of the Jews', but the Church has transformed the cross from instrument of torture and death into a symbol of peace and love. As we gaze upon the cross, let us allow God to transform our lives into those that spread Christ's peace and love in the world.

The Revd Dr Jen Brown, Rector

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

FOR TODAY'S SERVICE: Celebrant - The Revd Dr Jen Brown

Readings: Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 22; Philippians 2:6-11; John 3:13-17

Service Setting: Foster, St Matthew's Service

Hymns

Processional: 499 Lift High the cross

Gradual: 127 When I survey the wondrous cross

Offertory: 122 The royal banners forward go

Anthem: Foster, *The Dream of the Rood*

Post communion: 230 Ye watchers and ye holy ones

Collect: Almighty God, who in the passion of your blessed Son made an instrument of painful death to be for us the means of life and peace: grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer for his sake; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Intercessory prayer requests to clairembolton@googlemail.com.

For prayer:

- For pilgrims and for those just discovering faith
- For the places that make up the Holy Land, especially that peace may be restored and the people of all the Holy Land's faiths may live together peacefully
- For peacemakers and all who care for those in need and those on the margins
- For all who are in need of Christ's love and peace

Please pray for the residents of Crown Mews, Curtis Avenue, Curtyn Close, Cygnet Court.

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

NEXT SUNDAY'S SERVICE: Celebrant - The Revd Dr Jen Brown

10.30am *Sung Eucharist*, **5.30pm** *Choral Evensong*

Readings: Proverbs 3:13-18; Psalm 119; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; Matthew 9:9-13

CHURCH NOTICES

Ride + Stride: Robin Day would like to thank all who have supported and sponsored him as he and his family undertook this event.

Faith Forum: Our Autumn Faith Forum series begins in September and ties-in with Creationtide, offering an exploration of what is often termed eco-theology, that is, the theology that provides the rationale for creation care and informs our approach towards environmental action. Faith Forum meets in the parish centre hall, with lunch from 12.15pm and talks beginning at 12.45pm. When possible, talks are also made available on Zoom. Dates for the Autumn talks are:

September 27th: The goodness of creation (Margaret Adam)

October 25th: Creation care as act of praise (Hannah Mann, Diocese of Oxford)

November 22nd: A new or a renewed earth? (Jen Brown)

Desiring Life: The “Desiring Life” group meets in the Parish Centre lounge this **Tuesday 15th September at 2.15 pm**, and then fortnightly. We will be reading and discussing “Listening to the Music” by Guli Francis-Dehqani. New members welcome. Contact Rosalind Rutherford if you have any queries :

Rosalind.rutherford81@gmail.com

Confirmation and admission to Holy Communion: A parish-wide Confirmation Service is planned for **Sunday 31st January, 10.30am** at St Helen’s.

For those wishing to be confirmed there will be preparation evenings on **14th, 21st & 28th October, 7.30-8.30pm** in the parish centre lounge. If you or your child would be interested in confirmation, and have not already done so, please speak to Revd Jen or Fr AKMA. We can also offer preparation for admission to 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: The foodbank needs biscuits, squash, cereal, tinned macaroni cheese & UHT milk as well as empty egg boxes, carrier bags and wet cat or dog food. The collection box is by the welcome desk. Your ongoing support is much appreciated.

The Window: The September Issue of the Parish Magazine will be available this Sunday, 13th September from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php

CiA News: The **September** issue of CiA News is available to download from: https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_communications.html. Copies also in church.

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

REGULAR SERVICES AND THE COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

ON WEEKDAYS	9.10am Morning Prayer
ON MONDAY	9.30-11.00 <i>Baby and Toddler Group</i> in the hall
ON TUESDAY	2.15pm <i>Desiring Life</i> in the lounge (alternate weeks) 7.30-9.00pm <i>Bell ringing</i> in the tower (alternate weeks)
ON WEDNESDAY	10.30am Holy Communion
ON THURSDAY	
ON FRIDAY	4.00-6.00pm <i>Young Bell Ringers Practice</i> in the tower 5.30-6.30pm <i>Quest choir practice</i> 6.30-7.30pm <i>Adult choir practice</i>
ON SATURDAY	10.00 – 4.00pm <i>Heritage Day</i> in the church
ON SUNDAY	10.30am Sung Eucharist 12.00 – 4.00pm <i>Heritage Day</i> in the church 5.30pm Taizé (2nd Sunday) 5.30pm Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday) 5.30pm Service for Healing & Wholeness (4th Sunday)

*The 8am Sunday Holy Communion (1662) service is held at **St NICOLAS** Church*

CONTACT US

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.

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

A copy of this Newsletter is posted on our website.