



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 4th October 2026

Trinity 18/St Francis

Celebrating All Creation

Today is the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. Because of St Francis' association with care for the natural world and kindness to animals, today is Animal Welfare Sunday which the church observes as the start of Creationtide. . There's a lot going on there! But it is all related.

St Francis was a reformer and an innovator. He is reputed to have created the first nativity scene to help people engage with the story of Jesus' birth in a very physical, immediate way. And if people have heard only one thing about Francis, it is probably the story of him preaching to the birds. He took seriously the idea that all creation is loved by God and all creation worships God. He also took seriously the fact that Christian love should be for all creation. He is reputed to have set free animals that were caught and brought live to him by well-meaning people who thought Francis could kill them and use them for food. Refusing to kill an animal that is there, looking us in the eye, is something to which most of us can probably relate. But Francis also did something that many of us would probably find incredibly difficult – he embraced a life of poverty. That matters. Embracing poverty was an act of solidarity with those who were poor by circumstance, not by choice. It was a way of demonstrating his dependence on and trust in God to provide. And it was a way of living gently on the earth, making do with enough. That is something we can strive to emulate.

Celebrating creation goes hand-in-hand with having a theology and an attitude that embrace 'enough' – not always striving to have more than we need. In our society, that's not easy. There is always something else to tempt us, more advertising to convince us that there is more that we need. But being satisfied with enough will reduce the exploitation of the earth and depletion of the earth's resources. It reduces exploitation of the poor. It allows space for other creatures to thrive alongside us. God gives abundantly. God always provides enough. We can follow the example of St Francis and trust in God's provision, and with that, grow in love for God, our fellow human beings, non-human animals, and the earth itself.

The Revd Dr Jen Brown, Rector

WELCOME to all joining us this Sunday at St Helen's. **10.30am** *Sung Eucharist (First Sunday and Harvest Festival)*. 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: The Revd Dr Jen Brown

Readings: 2 Corinthians 9.6-15; Luke 12.16-30.

Service Setting: Rutter

Hymns

Processional: 250 All creatures of our God and King

Gradual: 254 For the fruits of his creation

Offertory: 251 All things bright and beautiful

Anthem: Rutter, *For the beauty of the earth*

Post communion: 275 We plough the fields and scatter

Collect: O God, you ever delight to reveal yourself to the childlike and lowly of heart: grant that, following the example of the blessed Francis, we may count the wisdom of this world as foolishness and know only Jesus Christ and him crucified, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen

Intercessory prayer requests to clairembolton@googlemail.com.

For prayer:

- The earth, especially those places, habitats and ecosystems harmed by pollution, climate change, and overuse of natural resources
- Non-human animals, particularly those that are exploited, abused, or neglected by human beings
- Individuals and organisations that work to preserve natural places
- Individuals and organisations that protect and care for non-human animals, wild or domestic
- Farmers and those whose work gets our food from farm to table
- Those suffering pet bereavement, especially when their grief is dismissed or misunderstood by others

Please pray for the residents of Dundas Close, East St Helens Street, Edward Street, Elwes Close

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

NEXT SUNDAY'S SERVICE:

10.30am *Sung Eucharist*

Readings: Isaiah 25.1-9, Philippians 4.1-9, Matthew 22.1-14

CHURCH NOTICES

Jill Gant. There is a book for memories and tributes to Jill, on a table in the south aisle of the church. Please do add your thoughts of and prayers for Jill. There is also a card from Fr Paul Smith to all the congregation, in sympathy for our loss.

Congratulations! Congratulations to Sue Scott (St Michael's), Jenny Smith (St Nic's), and Linda Hobbs (St Helen's) who all became members of the Fellowship of St Birinus at a service in Dorchester Abbey on September the 20th.

Colin and Val Casemore would be delighted if you would join them in the South Aisle after the service on **Sunday 11th October** for Prosecco and Cake when they are (finally!) able to celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary

Your Church needs you! We are looking for people who could help with the provision of hospitality from time to time. Currently we have a list of Sunday coffee helpers who do a great job, but there is a need for people who can help with more 'substantial' hospitality events such as parish social events, or the Epiphany tea. Help in this area might include baking some food, setting tables and serving. More importantly, we need one, or two people together, to co-ordinate this - to keep the email list and send out requests for help, to put up "sign up" sheets for offerings of food, to have an overall knowledge of what glasses, plates, cloths, cutlery we have and where it is stored, to check in with clergy, Administrator or wardens as to what is required and when.

If we wish to continue to offer a warm and hospitable welcome, with food and drink on offer, then we need the people to supply it. At the moment there are only two men on the list of helpers; in this age of equality, step forward, gentlemen, and show us what you can do! Please let the wardens or Administrator know if you can help.

Prayers & Bears: A new service suitable for young children (including babies/toddlers) will be starting at St Michael's on Tuesday 6th October at 11am. We aim to meet on the first Tuesday of each month and includes a social time with refreshments.

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

If you or your child is 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.

A copy of this Newsletter is posted on our website.

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 is now available to download 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 FRIDAY	4.00-6.00pm <i>Young Bell Ringers Practice</i> in the tower 5.30-6.00pm <i>Quest choir practice</i> 6.00-7.00pm <i>Adult choir practice</i>
ON SUNDAY	10.30am Sung Eucharist 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