

The Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames

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From the Team Rector's Office

May 23rd 2022

Dear Friends,

When it rains it pours – we all know that saying. At the moment it's pouring; I mean a lot lies on the immediate horizon for us as a congregation, a parish and as a nation. I'm writing to remind you of events and services forth-coming that might easily be forgotten in the mix of life but in which I hope you will, in so far as you can, want to share.

This **Thursday, May 26th**, is **Ascension Day** and, as has been our custom since 2016, we will gather at St Nicolas Church in the Market Square at 7 pm for a parish-wide Eucharist to celebrate the Ascension of our Lord. In itself the feast celebrates the resurrection triumph of Jesus; for *us* it begins a period of expectation through the nine days of Ascensiontide as we wait to mark the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost. I am currently preparing a leaflet of prayers to accompany that nine-day spiritual journey. It will be sent electronically, but hard copies will be available in the Parish Office, in St Helen's and at St Nicolas on Ascension Day itself and in the days following. I hope you will benefit from it. Its theme is *anointing* and includes materials relevant to a prayerful marking of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

Ascensiontide is the theme of the Fifth Sunday **Sacred Concert on May 29th at 5.30 pm** at St Helen's. Our talented Assistant Organist, whose postludes after Evensong many stay in church to enjoy and admire will offer this Sunday's programme. A flyer accompanies this letter; take a look at what's in store.

As already mentioned, Ascensiontide this year includes the occasion of the nation's celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of the Queen's Coronation. All sorts of celebratory events are planned. Christians of course will want to share in those. It remains our singular privilege and duty amidst all the happenings to assume a spiritual posture. By that I mean praying for Her Majesty, and both thanking and praising God for her Christian witness as monarch. To help that our parish-wide **Service of Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving** will take place on the very day of Her Majesty's Service of Coronation, **June 2nd (a Thursday this year) as 7 pm**. The service will be last one hour; celebratory refreshments will follow, leaving plenty of time to venture forth to see beacons lit across our area. Please make this service a priority if you are in Abingdon on the night. The choir is preparing hard to help make it a robust and joyful experience!

May God bless us all as we enter a season abundant in spiritual riches.

Charles Miller