

Changes to office hours due to Lockdown: You can contact the Parish Administrator by email, leave a message on the office phone 01235 520144 as usual or on the office mobile: 07395 943957 during normal office hours: Monday-Friday, 10am – 1pm; the office is closed on Thursdays.

For Your Thoughts and Prayers :

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York and senior church leaders have called a month of Prayer for the Nation during the second lockdown. The following is one of their suggested prayers:

- In this time of great challenge, we pray for the economic wellbeing of the country
- We remember before God those who face great uncertainty in their work
- We lift before God those who have lost their jobs and face an uncertain and difficult future. We pray for a renewed commitment to our common life together.

For intercessory prayer requests contact clairebolton@googlemail.com.

Please pray for the residents of Mill Road, Mill Stream Court, Mons Way, Mullard Way

For health & wellbeing: Connie Tait, Barbara Mazey, Janet and Ken Chapman, Anne Benad, Margaret Brooks, Mary Barton, Sue Hartley, Chris Bayliss, Bill Burnett, Gina Bruce, Sue Phipps, Angela Smith, Eleanor Robinson (outside Parish), Mary Blanks, Laura Davies, Ann Moss, Alexandra Green, Yong Mama (Sok Han's mother), Marian Phillips, Linda Brewer, Silvia Joinson.

Next Week's Readings: (Isaiah 64.1-9); 1 Corinthians; Mark 13.24-37

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Charles Miller
Team Vicar	The Revd Paul Smith
Associate Priests	The Revd Jennifer Brown The Revd Canon Charles Mashedor The Revd Sok Han Yong
Licensed Lay Minister	Mrs Gwen Bevington
Wardens	Mrs Linda Hobbs and Dr Geoff Meen
Director of Music	Dr Peter Foster
Assistant Organist	Mr Andrew Shouler
Parish Administrator	Mrs Jenny Balshaw
Caretaker	Mr Philip Atkinson

Parish Office 01235 520144 or 07395 943957

E-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

<http://https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/>.

A copy of this Newsletter is posted regularly on our website.



St HELEN'S CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

22nd November 2020

Sunday before Advent/Christ the King

Using your gifts to St Helen's wisely

Next week our stewardship campaign draws to a close and it might be helpful to highlight why your gifts are so important.

When new Economics students are asked what they think the subject is about, they often answer, "money". In reality, Economics is about how we allocate the world's scarce resources in the best possible way. If there was no scarcity there would be no problem, but most resources are scarce in one way or another and we have to choose how those resources should be allocated between members of society – the rich or poor, the young or older. In addition, we have to decide how resources should be allocated between current and future generations. A failure to do this well is one reason why environmental problems arise. More immediately, the government will need to choose the priority groups for the scarce vaccine.

These national and international issues have a local dimension. You have a choice between giving to the church or buying another cup of coffee or you could give to charities directly rather than the church. Therefore, we have to justify our use of resources and think strategically about our priorities. "Money" simply allows us to extend the priority list.

The Diocese has its own priority areas set out in its Common Vision. These include: making a bigger difference in the world; catechesis and discipleship; growing new congregations; schools, children and young people. We cannot do everything but the list provides a useful starting point. Last week's Newsletter discussed the important role that St Helen's plays in "making a difference" through charities in Abingdon. Under the same priority, we are taking very seriously the national church target of achieving net carbon neutrality by 2030. Since we spend around £6,000 per annum on energy, there are strong financial as well as environmental reasons for reducing our footprint. Recently, a comprehensive energy audit was carried out in the church and, over the longer term, we will be looking at how we can be even more innovative.

None of this is easy at this time, but you can be sure that your donations will be used wisely in support of the church and wider community.

Geoff Meen, Church Warden

FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP

Readings: (Ezekiel 34.11-16)
Ephesians 1.15-end
Matthew 25.31-end

Collect: Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

THIS COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

Morning Prayer will not be said publicly during the current lockdown.

SERVICES ONLINE DURING LOCKDOWN. The 10.30 Sunday Eucharist will be recorded and available via the parish website <https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/>

NOTICES

WEDNESDAY HOLY COMMUNION. Please consult newsletters about mid-December.

CHURCHES OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER.

St Helen's Church will not be open for private prayer during November. ***St Michael & All Angels Church* is open for private prayer on Thursdays, 11am to 1pm;** *St Nicolas' Church* is not currently open.

ADVENT ONLINE READING GROUP. The proposed online Advent Reading Group will start meeting via Zoom at 4pm on Thursday November 19th, and for the following four Thursdays. The book to be read is *The Meaning is in the Waiting* by Paula Gooder published by Canterbury Press in 2008. The group will be facilitated by Rosalind Rutherford and materials will be circulated in advance, especially

for those unable to obtain the book. To join the group contact Susan Scott, on 01235 522960 or susan.scott21@btinternet.com. Information regarding Zoom will be in next week's newsletter.

DECEMBER FAITH FORUM. Due to the uncertainty surrounding possible post-lockdown restrictions the December *Faith Forum* talk on Sunday 6th December will be on Zoom only. There will be *no* gathering in the Parish Centre. Please note the start time for the December talk is **9am**. A link to the Zoom session will be circulated nearer the time. For those unable to join the Zoom session a recording will be available on-line following the event.

A CANDLE IN THE WINDOW Reminder! You are invited to contribute to the December edition. In addition to previous ideas you could send us photographs of Autumn colours or a memory of an unusual Christmas etc. Encourage others to contribute as well! Deadline Friday 27th November. Please send to candle@abingdonparish.org.uk.

ST HELEN'S AWARDED GOVERNMENT GRANT. Many of you will have seen that the repairs to the North Aisle and Nave are now underway. The temporary problems arising from the scaffolding will be worthwhile in the slightly longer term. However, we are pleased to report that a large part of the cost of these essential repairs will be covered by a new £20,000 grant from the Government's Heritage Stimulus Fund, part of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund. We are very grateful for the award, but we should be aware that, as a capital grant, this does not improve the expected church operating deficit (which covers day-to-day expenditures) and is the focus of the stewardship campaign. Geoff Meen.

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE CARDS and/or COLLECTION. During the new *lockdown* any monies can be sent to, or dropped into, the Parish Office (see *Parish office* notice below). You can also email your pledge

response to the Stewardship Recorder, Jeff Dale, at the address in the Stewardship leaflet.

CHRISTMAS CARDS for sale celebrating *Church in Abingdon Twinning Group* (£4.50 for pack of 10, 2 designs). Enquiries to Elizabeth Simpson Ab 524978. St Helen's Christmas cards are available from the Parish Centre (£3.00 for pack of 5) or contact Anne Faulkner on Ab 531880.

ABINGDON FOOD BANK is planning to distribute parcels of food to those in need of assistance this Christmas. Food will include the "extra" items of food that we would expect to purchase to add to our Christmas meals such as Tins of ham, salmon, potatoes, carrots, peas, gravy granules, cranberry sauce, stuffing, Christmas puddings, custard, tins of fruit, jars of pickles/chutney, crackers for cheese, sweet biscuits, cakes, mice pies, sweets, chocolates, crisps and savoury snacks, toiletries. Last year the Abingdon Food Bank distributed over 150 parcels of Christmas food; this year the need is even greater. Please leave contributions in the Parish Centre or if you are unable to, collection can be arranged.

CHURCH IN ABINGDON Annual Bereavement service hosted by All Saints and Trinity Church is available on: <https://youtu.be/WzOhryPNKAo>.

ABINGDON SCOUTS & GUIDES Christmas post. Due to the COVID-19 situation the Christmas post is cancelled. We apologise for any inconvenience and look forward to serving you again in 2021.

PARISH OFFICE. *The office will be open Mondays and Wednesdays only during the lockdown. Please phone ahead to arrange access and observe COVID protocols by signing in if you visit the office. Jenny will be working from home on Tuesdays and Fridays and can be contacted by email or by phone on 07395 943957.*
