

You can contact the Parish Administrator by email or phone 01235 520144 or 07395 943957 from Monday – Thursday, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm (closed on Fridays); please observe COVID protocols and sign in when you visit.

For Your Thoughts and Prayers

- In our Abingdon Deanery the clergy and congregation of St James the Great, Radley;
- All who bear the name 'James' in English and any other language;
- Pilgrims following the route to the Shrine of St James of Compostella;
- The Anglican chaplaincies in Spain and the churches of Spain generally.

For intercessory prayer requests contact clairembolton@googlemail.com.

Please pray for the residents of Caldecott Road, Causeway, Cemetery Road and Challenor Close.

For health & wellbeing: Connie Tait, Barbara Mazey, Ken Chapman, Anne Benad, Margaret Brooks, Mary Barton, Sue Hartley, Chris Bayliss, Bill Burnett, Sue Phipps, Eleanor Robinson (outside Parish), Mary Blanks, Ann Moss, Linda Brewer, Thea Murphy, Frank Peirson, Janet Perry, Nancy McLellan, Tom Bewley.

Next Week's Readings: Exod. 16-2-4, 9-15; Eph. 4.1-16; John 6.24-35

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Charles Miller
Team Vicar	The Revd Paul Smith
Associate Priests	The Revd Jennifer Brown The Revd Canon Charles Mashedor
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 Jackie Cunningham
Caretaker	Mr Philip Atkinson

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E-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk
[http://https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/](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

July 25th 2021

St James the Great, Apostle

The Great St James

Today we celebrate the Feast of St James 'the Great' who, together with his brother John - the 'sons of thunder' according to Jesus (see Mark 3.17) and St Peter, was one of Jesus' inner circle. St James was with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (a feast we celebrate on August 6th each year) and with the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of the arrest.

If 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed-bed of the church' then St James, the first martyr among the apostolic band, must indeed be counted among our forefathers in faith. He witnesses to the possibility of closeness to Jesus in spiritual devotion and friendship, but also to the cost of such fidelity. How is our devotion to Christ costly? What price is too high to pay? A feast like this puts such questions to us and bids us fashion an answer.

Another Step Forward

Last Monday we took another step forward toward life not *post*-pandemic but *with* Covid-19 as a co-habitant in our world. It may be strange to think in those terms since a lot of the rhetoric through the past year and half has been about "beating" the virus as though thorough extermination were possible. It's not. So we find ourselves, like forbears who had to adjust to the prevalence of influenzas hitherto unknown, weighing up anew the risks that human life on this earth must face. Even as ways of living each day *improve*, each of us individually, and we as a community, must still decide how to engage in life, business and relationships where a new 'risk factor' is involved. Life now requires us to be rather more premeditated and thoughtful in our living of it and less casual, free-spirited and (perhaps) presumptuous. Not a bad thing, I suspect, despite the irritation it can cause. We'll cope! Church life and worship too can inch ahead further and that is what we'll do as we step into the next month.

Charles Miller, Team Rector

WELCOME to St Helen's today, St James the Great, Apostle. Holy Communion (BCP) is at 8am at St Nicolas'.

The *Eucharist* is at 10.30am and can also be accessed on Zoom from 10.15am. There will be no evening service.

FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP

Readings: Jer. 45.1-5; Acts 11.27-12.2;
Matt.20.20-28

Hymns:

250 All Creatures of our God and King
621 Who Would True Valour See
627 Ye Servants of God, your Master Proclaim
215 For All Thy Saints O God

Psalm: 126 Wickens

Anthem: Franck, Panis angelicus

Collect:

Merciful God, whose holy apostle Saint James, leaving his father and all that he had, was obedient to the calling of your Son Jesus Christ and followed him even to death: help us, forsaking the false attractions of the world, to be ready at all times to answer your call without delay; 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.

THIS COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

There will be no Morning Prayer.

ON WEDNESDAY *Holy Communion* will be in the South Aisle at 10.30am. [No booking required].

NEXT SUNDAY *Holy Communion* will be at 8.00am at St Helen's'. [Booking: contact papenfold@aol.co.uk or jil129@outlook.com].

The *Eucharist* will be celebrated at 10.30am. Booking is no longer required.

NOTICES

CHURCH OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER. St Helen's Church is open from 11am to 1pm for private prayer and visitors, on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the summer months, ending in the week of St Helen's Patronal Festival, on 16th September.

Coffee is resuming on Sunday 25 July. Several of our helpers are unable to continue on the coffee rota. If anyone would like to volunteer to fill in the many gaps please contact Janet Dale, telephone 01235 531521 or email janetdale50@mypostoffice.co.uk

Silent Reflections on Tuesday 27 July at 7.30pm will be held in St Michael's; the precise manner will depend on the restrictions in place at the time. It is likely that the wearing of masks will be optional, and that refreshments will be available at the end. Rosalind Rutherford will introduce material on the theme: *The Lilies of the Field*. A copy will still be emailed to all those on our list, and made available on St Michael's website. Paper copies will be available in church.

MU notice. On the 3rd August, several of our members are doing a 5Km sponsored walk/jog around Albert Park for our "Summer of Hope" initiative. The money raised will help support MU projects in countries around the world. We hope you will sponsor us.

Friends of St Helen's (FOSH): Our AGM will be held on Saturday 14th August at 3pm in the South Aisle of the Church, to be followed at 3.45pm by scrumptious cake. FOSH provides a vehicle for preserving St Helen's for future generations, and we are keen to encourage membership amongst people who live and work in the wider Abingdon community, or indeed further afield. All are invited, and please bring your family and friends - especially if they are likely to join us as members.

Congregational singing in the Abingdon Parish. I know many worshippers at our three churches will be very happy to learn that as of 25th July, congregational singing is once more allowed in church. However, guidance both from the government and from the House of Bishops is that we should consider the local position, and make sure we do not endanger vulnerable members of the congregation. Levels of Covid infection are currently high and rising in Oxfordshire, so we ask you to observe the following precautions when singing:

- You are invited to join in the hymns and the Sanctus (Holy, holy holy). Other items will be sung by the choir.
- If you are at least two metres from anyone who does not live in your house, you are welcome to remove your mask while singing. If not, please keep it on.
- Where possible, face in the same direction as the people around you. Do not sing towards anyone else.

If you have a minor bug – especially coughs and sneezes – you should stay at home. The church is a very big space in relation to the number of people singing, so the risk of infection through build up of aerosols (tiny particles of moisture that are exhaled when singing, speaking, coughing, etc.) is low. We plan to reduce the risk still further by keeping as many doors open as possible, and sometimes possibly by cutting verses from hymns.

Appeal for more Stewards

In this 'staycation' summer, when we expect many more visitors to Abingdon, is it possible that we can open the church for more than two days a week as at present?

If you think you can help would you please add your name and contact details to the sign up sheet on the notice board at the back of the church, and indicate which days you could be available. I will contact you to discuss. If you have not done stewarding before I will make sure you are with someone who knows the procedures. New stewards are very much welcomed.

Elizabeth Simpson 01235 524978