



St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

28th November 2021
1st Sunday of Advent

Regular Service Times

Sundays: Sung Mass, 9.30 am
Tuesdays: Silent Reflections, last Tuesday of the month (except December)
Thursdays: Said Mass, 12.30 pm

Contacts

Team Rector: The Revd Dr Charles Miller (520144)
Team Vicar: The Revd Paul Smith (534654)
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Churchwardens: Miss Joyce Kelly (533555)
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(07779 650968)
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Bookings*: Miss Joyce Kelly (as above)

Parish Office: The Parish office is open **Mondays to Thursdays, 10 am-1 pm**. Please observe COVID protocols and sign in when you visit.

Administrator: During normal working hours phone or leave a message on:
Telephone (520144) or
Mobile (07395 943957)
e-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

Web site: <https://www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk>

If you would like to receive this pew leaflet electronically, please email pewleaflet@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk with the subject line SUBSCRIBE.

***Items for inclusion in the next Leaflet to be sent to David Duce by midday on Tuesday. Telephone 522591
pewleaflet@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk***

[*for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals please contact the Parish Office]

Advent: Waiting with Joyful Expectation

Dear Friends

The unusually mild November seems to have changed with the arrival of cold mornings extending throughout the day but with beautiful blue skies and sunshine (at least at the time of writing). This change is a reminder that we are moving into winter and the end of another year. Today we also begin a new liturgical season, the start of the church's year, as we enter Advent, which leads us into the Christmas season.

David has written about the Advent season in this pewleaflet with some rich insights from various authors which will nourish us as we begin this hopeful and expectant season of four Sundays before Christmas.

Advent always recalls a special set of memories for me. It was during one Advent, over thirty years ago, when I first began to explore the catholic tradition of the Church of England and, at the same time, felt the initial stirrings of a vocation to ordained ministry. Those first stirrings led to a time of waiting which went on for many years: it was both testing and exciting and there was that tension of holding those two elements together. During this season, we both prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, but also wait intentionally with joyful expectation for the return of Christ in all his glory. When that unknown time and day arrives all things will be gathered up and made new and we shall see Jesus for who he really is. But the joyful expectation of his return requires the spiritual discipline of waiting. I don't think many of us like 'waiting'. It definitely goes against our current culture where everything is available now; where there is an expectation for everything to be done immediately. Waiting does not only makes us impatient, but it can make us anxious, taking us into the unknown and even giving us a sense of losing control. The way of discipleship requires waiting as we seek to discern at various times in our lives just what the will of God might be for us. This is never easy, because what is required of us is to learn to wait and to trust more deeply in the providence and faithfulness of God.

During these weeks of Advent, I wonder if we can set aside some time each day, especially as the pressure increases towards Christmas, to simply wait in the Lord's presence. May that waiting release us from impatience, anxiety, and fretfulness and bring us to a place of real joy before the Lord: even joyful expectation of His return in glory. Have a joyful Advent.

With love and blessings, *Fr Paul*

STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL Any further Thanksgiving Offering Cards for the coming year can be returned to the Parish Office for our treasurer, Susan Read, to collect.

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT ST HELEN'S CHURCH

St Helen's will live-stream their 10.30 am Eucharist through Zoom. The Zoom link is available from the Parish Administrator. A recording of the sermon will be made available after the service on the Parish Resources page on the St Helen's web site https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/Parish/P_resources.html

Morning Prayer is said publicly at St Helen's every weekday at 9.10am. *All Welcome*

CHRISTMAS FAIR: A message from Nicola and Louise: We would like to thank members of the congregation for their tremendous help and team effort in making the Christmas Fair a success. Many visitors commented on how much they enjoyed the day and we raised more than £1,200. (The exact amount will be publicised as soon as we have confirmed all the takings.) *Nicola and Louise*

Fr Paul continues: I would like to add my thanks to Nicola and Louise, for their oversight in making last Saturday the success it was, and to all of you who helped in any way during the run up to the Fair itself, and then the enormous amount of work that went on during the day. The provisional figure mentioned by Nicola and Louise is over £1,200 for church funds and over £130 each for our two nominated charities, TAB and TARIRO. A further donation may yet come our way. To put this in context, the Autumn Fair in 2019 raised £1,105 for church funds, and the 2018 Fair raised £1,122. This year's provisional result, given all the problems around the pandemic, is a major achievement. Congratulations and my deepest thanks to everyone. *Fr Paul*

SILENT REFLECTIONS will be held on Tuesday 30 November at 7.30 pm. Entry will be through the North door (opposite Albert Park). The wearing of masks is still recommended in areas of close contact. Final prayers will be at 8.30 pm and refreshments will be available. Sue Sheppy will introduce material on the theme: *Light in our darkness*. A copy will be emailed to all those on our list, and made available on the *Prayer and Worship* resources page on our website. Paper copies will be available in church. (NB There will be no Silent Reflections in December.)

MOVING INTO STILLNESS circle dancing to Taizé music with silent interludes will be held on Thursday 2 December from 9.45 – 10.45 am, before the regular circle dancing session at 11 am. Elizabeth Mitchell will be the teacher. No prior experience/partner needed. Tea and coffee will be provided between the two sessions.

CARSWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL are holding a Christmas Fair on Friday 3 December from 3.05pm to 6.30pm.

CONCERT - IN AID OF THE ABINGDON BRIDGE Sunday 5 December, 4pm, Unicorn Theatre. A Christmas Concert by Abingdon Chorale. Abingdon Chorale is a new choir, directed by Tim Robson. Expect some well-known tunes to hum along to - Jingle Bells, Away in a Manger, We Wish You a Merry Christmas - and some less familiar but equally

beautiful carols, such as Herbert Howells' A Spotless Rose, Morten Lauridsen's O Magnum Mysterium, and the traditional In dulci jubilo. All followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Abbey buildings. Tickets, price £5 (free for under 5s), are available in advance, <https://www.theabingdonbridge.org.uk>, or on the door subject to availability.

ADVENT LABYRINTH WALKS the church will be open on Tuesday 7, 14 and 21 December 2021 between 11 am and noon, and 7 pm and 8 pm. There will an opportunity to walk the labyrinth or simply to enjoy the sacred space.

Material for reflection will be available on a different Advent theme each week. A short prayer will be said at the beginning and end of each session, but feel free to come and go as you please. Entry will be through the door on the north side of the church (opposite Albert Park). The wearing of masks is still recommended in areas of close contact.

ABINGDON SCOUTS AND GUIDES Their post box will be in church until **Sunday 12 December**. They will deliver your Christmas cards/letters to Abingdon, Radley and Shippon only. 30p per card.

CHRISTMAS CARDS John Clare has packs of Christmas cards produced by the Church Twinning committee, priced at £4.50 for 10, to help us maintain our links with churches in Abingdon's twin towns, particularly important after Brexit! Anyone who would like some please see him in person or on 01235 525898 or johnclare.blunsdon@gmail.com

A CANDLE IN THE WINDOW The November issue of the Parish Magazine is now available to download from <https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/DNR/window.php> The theme of the December issue will be *Old and New*. Contributions - articles, short reflections, poems etc on this theme or not are all welcome. Please send to candle@abingdonparish.org.uk by **28 November**.

NEW PODCAST AND SPRING COURSES FROM THE DIOCESE See the Prayer and Resources web page for links to the new podcast Episode from Bishop Steven and Bishop Mary, Assistant Bishop in the Episcopal Area of New York. Also details of the courses from the diocese for next Spring, *Equipping for life – Learning for discipleship and ministry*.

Worship

This Week The celebrants and preachers for the next three weeks are: Fr Paul/ the Revd Elizabeth Birch on 28 November, Fr Paul on 5 and 12 December.

Monday is a day of intercession and thanksgiving for the missionary work of the church. Tuesday is the festival of Andrew the Apostle. Other commemorations this week are Tuesday: Charles de Foucauld, hermit, 1916; Friday: Francis Xavier, missionary, 1552; Saturday: John of Damascus, monk, teacher of the faith, c. 749 and Nicholas Ferrar, deacon, founder of the Little Gidding Community, 1617.

Advent Sunday is the first of the four Sundays in Advent. The liturgical scholars Benjamin Gordon-Taylor and Simon Jones pose the question in their book *Celebrating Christ's Appearing*, "Is Advent a penitential or a preparatory season?" They continue "it has often been thought of as a 'little Lent'." There are elements in our liturgy that are common between Advent and Lent that might support that thought, our use of a different Mass setting, replacement of the Gloria by the Kyries and use of Eucharistic Prayer E rather than Prayer B, the liturgical colour purple. Penitence is one element in the tradition, but preparation is another. The authors of *Companion to Common Worship* (Volume 2) write "An earlier emphasis on penitence, although not universal, tends to be downplayed, ... Advent is now seen as 'a season of expectation and preparation', although of course preparation properly includes a measure of penitence". Percy Dearmer wrote (1932):

The tendency of the present day to make another Lent of Advent is much to be deprecated. The O Sapientia (the first of the Great O Antiphons) in our Kalendar and the use of Sequences in the old English books may remind us of the spirit of joyful expectation which is the liturgical characteristic of Advent.

Some readers may recall the use of the Advent Prose (NEH 501) and the Lent Prose (NEH 507) in place of the opening hymn at the start of Mass in Sundays in Advent and Lent. There is an interesting contrast between them. The antiphons and the final verses of each are shown below.

Advent Prose

Antiphon: Drop down ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Last verse: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, my salvation shall not tarry: I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgression. Fear not, for I will save thee: For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer.

Lent Prose

Refrain: Hear us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we have sinned against thee.

Last verse: Innocent, captive, taken unresisting: falsely accused, and for us sinners sentenced, save us, we pray thee, Jesu our Redeemer.

Through the web pages of St Saviour's Oxton (where our former curate, Fr Joe Kennedy, is the parish priest) the Editor came across a YouTube video, *Advent in 2 minutes*, which might appeal to some readers. The link can be found on our *Prayer and Resources* web page.

Rowan Williams in a sermon on Advent (*Open to Judgement*, 1994) wrote:

The Christian in Advent needs to ... listen to such a degree that this season becomes *both* a season of joyful expectancy *and* a season of 'poverty' – of the knowledge that we cannot talk and touch ourselves into life; of that deep poverty of the imagination which can only stand helplessly before the outrages and miseries of our world, utterly at a loss for a word of meaning or hope to speak. We are here at all, celebrating Advent because there has been *a word* spoken, a word of unexpected interruption, a word that establishes for good the difference between the God we expect and the God who comes, a word that shows us once and for all what an idol looks like in face of the truth. ... Advent insists that we stay for a while in this tension of being 'on the eve', if only in order that the new thing we celebrate at Christmas may have a chance of being truly new for us, not a stale and pious cliché.

Advent Wreath One feature of our liturgical tradition is the lighting of a candle on the Advent Wreath on each of the four Sundays. There is more than one tradition for this, we follow the three purple candles plus a pink candle for the Third Sunday (if we had a set, rose-pink vestments would be worn), arranged in a ring with a central white candle that is lit on Christmas Day. The scheme for the themes best-matching the Common Worship lectionary is 1 – The Patriarchs, 2 – The Prophets, 3 – John the Baptist, 4 – The Virgin Mary, 5 – The Christ. The lighting of each candle is accompanied by a prayer – that for the First Sunday of Advent is:

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors: to you be praise and glory for ever.

You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment.

May we be obedient to your call and be ready and watchful to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are our light and our salvation. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Please pray for:

- Steven and Gavin our bishops, Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury;
- a sense of joyful expectation in the keeping of Advent;
- the Advent Labyrinth Walks;
- give thanks for the work of the Church Mission Society (CMS);
- the District Church Council meeting on Thursday evening;
- the suffering, all who mourn, the recently departed, and all whose year's mind falls at this time;
- people living in Caldecott Road, Causeway, Cemetery Road and Challenor Close.

Eucharistic Lectionary

Sun	Jeremiah 33.14-16	Ps 25.1-9	1 Thessalonians 3.9-end	Luke 21.25-36
Mon	Isaiah 2.1-5	Ps 122		Matthew 8.5-11
Tues Andrew	Isaiah 52.-10	Ps 19.1-6	Romans 10.12-18	Matthew 4.18-22
Wed	Isaiah 25.6-10a	Ps 23		Matthew 15.29-37
Thur	Isaiah 26.1-6	Ps 118.18-27a		Matthew 7.21, 24-27
Fri	Isaiah 29.17-end	Ps 27.1-4, 16-17		Matthew 9.27-31
Sat	Isaiah 30.19-21, 23-26	Ps 146.4-9		Matthew 9.35-10.1, 6-8

Collect (1st Sunday of Advent)

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Prayer after Communion (1st Sunday of Advent)

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through ...

Collect (Andrew the Apostle)

Almighty God, who gave such grace to your apostle Saint Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ and brought his brother with him: call us by your holy word, and give us grace to follow you without delay and to tell the good news of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

Some On-line Resources for Worship

Parish resources page

http://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/Parish/P_resources.html.

St Michael's Prayer and Worship resources page

https://www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk/worship_resources.htm

Oxford Cathedral: Livestream events will appear on the cathedral's YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqz9I9-LbZJAPGtje0gQbbg/videos>

Community of the Resurrection: live streaming and recordings of the community's daily round of prayer and praise

<https://www.facebook.com/Join-with-us-103095121647089>. Details of services at the facebook page and also at the

Community web site, <https://mirfield.org.uk/community-of-the-resurrection/our-life-and-work/worship/> On

Sundays Mass starts around 8.10 am, after Matins at 7.30 am.

Walsingham In addition to the daily live-streaming of Shrine Prayers at 6 pm (5pm on Fridays). the Sunday Mass is

live-streamed (usually at 7.30 am, but check the web site), <https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/>