



St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

5th December 2021
2nd Sunday of Advent

Regular Service Times

Sundays: Sung Mass, 9.30 am
Tuesdays: Silent Reflections, last Tuesday of the month (except December)
Advent Labyrinth Walks, 7, 14 and 21 December, 11 am – noon and 7 – 8 pm
Thursdays: Said Mass, 12.30 pm

Contacts

Team Rector: The Revd Dr Charles Miller (520144)
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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]

A Prophet who prepares for another is announced...

Dear Friends

We have begun to move steadily through this season of Advent. We are embarking upon a journey symbolised by the use of Advent Calendars; the burning of a single Advent Candle (something I do at home); and of course the lighting of a new candle every week on our Advent Wreath. Today we light the second candle for the Prophets down the ages who have spoken out in their own time and age with words carrying a particular message.

In today's Old Testament reading from the prophet Malachi, (3.1), Christians have taken this to refer to the birth of John the Baptist. We know that John, also known as the forerunner, certainly took a direct approach when speaking his message.

In the gospel he is introduced as a prophet – one to whom the word of God came – but his own words emphasise that his role is one of preparation for another. His task and his words point to the coming Messiah. His message is not polite. It is an announcement that there is to be a profound change in all state of affairs: political, social and cultural. This change is about things being beyond recognition and people are called to take note, watch out, be encouraged and join in, because this is a message that calls all of us to play our part as disciples. We would do well to perhaps consider what John the Baptist, the strangest of figures dressed in a hair shirt and with very odd eating habits, has to say to us in our own age? What political, social and cultural shifts might he indicate need to happen in our current crises of pandemic, climate change, humanitarian devastation in parts of the world, and so on? It is message that is no less difficult for us than it was for his first hearers and disciples. He heralds the coming of the One who turns the world upside down and invites us to play our part in the new life which is about to sweep its way through the church and the world. We should be both challenged and comforted to be invited to participate in welcoming Jesus who is our light and hope.

With love and blessings, *Fr Paul*

ST NICOLAS' PATRONAL EVENSONG: Today at 5.30pm our friends at St Nicolas' will be keeping their Patronal Festival with Choral Evensong. The preacher will be the Revd Canon Dr Emma Percy, Bowles Lecturer and Chaplain of Trinity College, Oxford. All are welcome to the service and no booking is required. Please do come along if you can. *Fr Paul*

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*

MUSIC FOR A SUNDAY AFTERNOON The autumn concert series raised £795 for church funds. Our thanks to the musicians, organisers and everyone who participated.

FAITH FORUM: LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH – *Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.* The last session in the series is looking at the 'Cultural Context'. It will be held in St Helen's Centre Hall, on 5 December starting at 9.15 am, preceded by a Breakfast Bar at 9.00 am.

CONCERT - IN AID OF THE ABINGDON BRIDGE Sunday 5 December. All tickets for this event have now been sold.

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.

ALBERT PARK SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERT Friday 10 December at 7pm at St Michael's, followed by refreshments. Admission free, retiring collection for St Martin-in-the-Fields Christmas Appeal and St Michael's Church.

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 December issue of the Parish Magazine (2021 Issue 10) will be available to download from Sunday 5 December at <http://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/DNR/window.php>. Do read it and talk to the authors! Many thanks to those who have contributed throughout the year. The next issue will be in February with the theme 'Awakening'. *Rob, Eluned and Louise*

CHRISTIAN AID NEW YEAR WALK 2022 1– 31 January: Following the success of last year’s walk, the New Year Walk for Christian Aid in 2022 will again be a self-directed walk. Walkers will be able to complete the walk whenever they wish in January either on one day or spread across the month as convenient. Details of the challenge set for walkers, the destination points to be visited and how to make donations will be available from church representatives and notices in churches. For more information about either of these events, please contact Cliff Marshall at candpmarshall@btinternet.com.

EPISODE 5 of Bishop Steven’s podcast: *Distinctive* is now available. See our Prayer and Worship resources page for the link. The Church holds in tension two great images: on the one hand, we are a chosen race, God’s own people. On the other, we are aliens and exiles, living against the grain as we wait for God’s kingdom to come in its fulness. As we look forward in anticipation this Advent, the words of 1 Peter set us on the path of living as best we can in these in-between times.

Worship

This Week The celebrants and preachers for the coming weeks are: Fr Paul on 5 and 12 December and Fr Paul/ Mrs Beryl Clements on 19 December. The celebrants/ preachers at Christmas are Fr Paul on Christmas Day, 25 December (at 10 am) and The Revd Elizabeth Birch on Sunday 26 December.

Commemorations this week include Monday: Nicholas, bishop, c. 326; Tuesday: Ambrose, bishop, teacher of the faith, 397; Wednesday: Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Wednesday, Friday and Saturday are Ember Days.

Advent Wreath Today we light the second, purple, candle. The theme is The Prophets. The accompanying prayer is: Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever. Of old you spoke by the mouth of your prophets, but in our days you speak through your Son, whom you have appointed the heir of all things. Grant us, your people, to walk in his light, that we may be found ready and watching when he comes again in glory and judgement; for you are our light and our salvation. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Ember Days, days of prayer for those to be ordained deacon or priest, have traditionally been observed on the Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at various points in the year. *The Collect*:

Almighty God, you have entrusted to your Church a share in the ministry of your Son our great high priest: inspire by your Holy Spirit the hearts of many to offer themselves for the ministry of your Church, that strengthened by his power, they may work for the increase of your kingdom and forward the eternal praise of your name; through Jesus Christ ... Amen

Luke The lectionary for Advent 2021 to the eve of Advent 2022 is the Year C lectionary in the three year cycle. A passage from The Gospel according to Luke is read on most Sundays. Fr Nicolas CR in his short book *Revealing the Gospel* (available from the Mirfield bookshop) devotes three chapters to Luke: Revolutionary Luke, Forgiveness in Luke and Luke: The missionary theologian. As the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Wednesday, a few relevant passages from Revolutionary Luke are quoted below.

Luke’s Gospel ... tells some of the best stories of the birth and childhood of Jesus; it contains the canticles, Benedictus, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis; and even the passion story is softened by Jesus’ gentle forgiving nature – he says “Father forgive them ...” of those who crucified him, and only in this Gospel story do we hear that he forgave one of the thieves on the cross.

More than any other he highlights the role of Mary in bringing the Christ child into the world. Mary wasn’t just pregnant by the Spirit; she had to agree to it. She is absolutely crucial to the salvation story. In a sense most of the Marian doctrines, and the devotion that has grown up around Mary, find their source in the Annunciation. And for Mary read ‘women’. In almost every part of Luke’s Gospel a story about a man is followed by a story about a woman. It was revolutionary in Luke’s time to present women as equal to men.

Yet Luke goes further than that.

‘He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty’ (Luke 1:32, 33). ... Luke makes it clear from the start of his Gospel that the new Kingdom’s prime concern will be the poor, the weak, the sick: when Jesus emerges from his desert retreat he begins his preaching in Nazareth and reads from Isaiah as a kind of manifesto: “The spirit of the Lord ... has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives ... to let the oppressed go free.” (Luke 4:18,19)

Please pray for:

- Steven and Gavin our bishops, Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury;
- a sense of joyful expectation in the keeping of Advent;
- all medical scientists especially those working on researching the Omicron covid variant;
- the Advent Labyrinth Walks;

- the congregation of St Nicolas' Church celebrating their Patronal Festival on Sunday at 5.30pm;
- all engaged in theological education and ministerial formation, students and teachers;
- vocations to ordained and lay ministry and the religious life;
- the suffering, all who mourn, the recently departed, and all whose year's mind falls at this time;
- people living in Chaunterell Way, Checker Walk, Clifton Drive and Coleridge Drive.

Eucharistic Lectionary

Sun	Malachi 3:1-4	<i>Canticle: Benedictus</i>	Philippians 1.3-11	Luke 3.1-6
Mon	Isaiah 35	Ps 85.7-end		Luke 5.17-26
Tues	Isaiah 40.1-11	Ps 96.1, 10-end		Matthew 18.12-14
Wed	Isaiah 40.25-end	Ps 103.8-13		Matthew 11.28-end
Thur	Isaiah 41.13-20	Ps 145.1, 8-13		Matthew 11.11-15
Fri	Isaiah 48.17-19	Ps 1		Matthew 11.16-19
Sat	Ecclesiasticus 48.1-4, 9-11	Ps 80.1-4, 18-19		Matthew 17.10-13

Collect (2nd Sunday of Advent)

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

Prayer after Communion (2nd Sunday of Advent)

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord ...

Collect (Nicholas)

Almighty Father, lover of souls, who chose your servant Nicholas to be a bishop in the Church, that he might give freely of the treasures of your grace: make us mindful of the needs of others and, as we have received, so teach us also to give; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Almighty and everlasting God, who stooped to raise fallen humanity through the child-bearing of blessed Mary: grant that we, who have seen your glory revealed in our human nature and your love made perfect in our weakness, may daily be renewed in your image and conformed to the pattern of your Son Jesus Christ 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/>