



Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Abington
- the Church in the Park -
Welcome to our Dec/Jan Newsletter
2023

Rector's Pastoral Letter

A few weeks ago, Liz, our Ana Chaplain, and I had the pleasure of visiting our friend, Jan Patterson who lives on Billing Road in the parish.

Liz and I both got to know Jan through our Thursday morning service. She used to worship regularly in Abington on Sundays. But after her dear husband, John's death, Jan's sons often would visit her and take her out on Sundays which made her naturally settled in the Thursday congregation.

"She really appreciated the opportunity to worship on Thursdays. She would always help with the washing afterwards, saying that was all she could do to help." says Liz.



As the world got hit by the Pandemic, Jan's mobility also got deteriorated. She is no longer able to walk to the church without an assistance. So the church now comes to her every month with holy communion which she deeply appreciates.

"Do you know what I also appreciate?" asks Jan. "The monthly newsletter! I read every single article in it. It's so nice to be included in this way and to hear all the wonderful things that are happening around the church and the parish."

Both the communion and newsletter make me feel connected to the church. Please do thank all those who contribute to this for me.” Then she brings a shoebox filled with little Christmas Stockings that can go on Christmas trees. All hand sewn by Jan.

“It’s all I can offer. I am 96.” says Jan as she hands the shoebox over to Liz. “I was hoping these can be of any use for raising funds for our Christmas Charities.”

I am deeply touched by her kind gesture. She is 96. She can’t walk without help from others. And yet she still thinks about helping others and supporting the community she loves. Looking at Jan and her stockings reminds me of the last verse of the Christmas hymn, In the Bleak Midwinter.

*What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb,
if I were a wise man
I would do my part,
yet what I can I give him,
give my heart.*

For Jan, it’s her hand sewn stockings. And I am sure baby Jesus would smile to her, offering his most gentle and tender love for her. I wonder, what do I have to offer?

December can be so busy that we often just barely keep up with the things in our to-do list before Christmas. But what is Christmas about? It’s about Christ and His invitation for us to meet Him. And the Bible tells us that he is to be found not in a palace, not in a fancy audience room but at a back door (as Bishop Andrew said at the confirmation service), at a messy stable, in a manger. And He wants us to know what matters to Him the most. It’s not how presentable we are or how successful we are, how strong we are. He simply wants us to let Him love us wherever we are. If we can let Him love us then He can turn the messiest stable and grossest manger into the holiest place where we meet with God himself.

With love in Christ,
Jun

This month's preachers

3rd December, Advent 1: Alison Barnes on Christians Against Poverty
10th December, Advent 2: Jill Pickard on Read Easy
17th December, Advent 3: Liz Kelly
24th December, Advent 4: Rev. Tracy
24th December, Midnight Mass: Rev. David Spiers (Park Avenue Methodist)
25th December, Christmas: Rev. Jun
31st December, Christmas 1: Prester Coleman
7th January, Epiphany: Rev. Tracy
14th January, Epiphany 2: Rev. Jun
21st January, Epiphany 3: Alison Barnes
28th January, Candlemas: Liz Kelly

Readers and Intercessors for this month

3rd December, Advent 1: Readers: Owen Warr & Dianne Ward
Intercessor: Hilary Hodge
10th December, Advent 2: Readers: Chris Waters & Richard White
Intercessor: Liz Kelly
17th December, Advent 3: Readers: Alison Barnes & Jan Abel
Intercessor: Donald Loe
24th December, Advent 4: Readers: Evgenii & Olga Bates
Intercessor: Jenny Parkin
24th December, Midnight Mass: Readers: Fiona Crook & Mark Beesley
Intercessor: Bob Purser
25th December, Christmas: Readers: Rhiannon George & Prester Coleman
Intercessor: Alan Sutton
31st December, Christmas 1: Readers: Sue Harrison & Matthew George
Intercessor: Alison Barnes
7th January, Epiphany: Readers: Steve Groves & Peter Gompertz
Intercessor: Prester Coleman
14th January, Epiphany 2: Readers: Ken Hunter & Hilary Hodge
Intercessor: Matthew George
21st January, Epiphany 3: Readers: John Langley & Liz Kelly
Intercessor: Rhiannon George
28th January, Candlemas: Readers: Olivia May & Donald Loe
Intercessor: Peter Gompertz

St Peter and St Paul Abington "the church in the park" invites you to



Follow The Star

Join the Song

Please join us in celebrating
Christmas at St Peter & St Paul
Abington

Follow the Star Trail

*A self guided trail around the Churchyard to discover the amazing story of
Stella the little star and the first Christmas
Open all day from 1 December until 6th January*

Make your own Christingle Service 3pm Sunday 10th December

Lessons and Carols Service 6pm Sunday 17th December.

Followed by mince pies and refreshments

Crib Service 3pm Sunday 24th December

Midnight Service 11.30pm Sunday 24th December

Christmas Morning Family Eucharist 10am Christmas Day

All our services and activities are open to
everyone and free to enjoy. We look
forward to welcoming you.



*For more information, or to contact us,
please see details on our website
www.abingtonchurch.org.uk*

Confirmation!

Many congratulations to Richard (on the far left) who was confirmed on Sunday the 26th of November at Christ Church. Also our great thanks to Bishop Andrew!



Reverse Advent Calendar for Babies and Mums

To conclude our year supporting Baby Basics 10th Anniversary, we will be running a reverse advent calendar. This means for each day between 1st and 24th December, we will be asking everyone to give an item instead of receiving one as you would do with a normal advent calendar. Leaflets are available at the back of the church and the posters are on the notice boards. Let's finish our year of supporting Baby Basics on a high! Thank you.

If you would like to find more about our outreach and community projects, please do speak with Melissa, the Chair of Outreach and Community Committee.



Baby Basics Northampton provides basic provisions to new vulnerable mums

When Jesus was born, he slept in the animals' feeding place, because Mary didn't have a bed to place her newborn son into.

Baby Basics Northampton wants to ensure that every baby has a safe place to sleep and that each mother has the essentials she needs for the first weeks of a baby's life.

We help families in need by giving them a starter pack as a gift of God's love, all wrapped-up in a moses basket for the new baby to sleep in. Working with local health visitors, midwives, family workers, children centres and other agencies, starter packs are distributed to those most in need.



Could you give the gift of love this Christmas to local families?

We will be collecting donations for Baby Basics Northampton during the Christmas period. If you would like to support Baby Basics Northampton by giving a gift of love this Christmas, the charity can accept the following items:

Brand New items for Baby

- Baby Shampoo
- Baby Bubble Bath
- Baby Lotion
- Baby Wash / Soap
- Baby Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Cotton Wool Balls
- Nappies (size 0, 1, 2)
- Nappy Sacks
- Baby Wipes
- Soft Toy suitable from birth

Brand New items for Mum

- Shampoo / Conditioner
- Shower Gel
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Tissues
- Breast Pads
- Maternity / Sanitary Towels
- Comb / Hair Band
- Hand Wash / Soap
- Toiletry Gift Sets
- Box of Chocolates

or



You can make a monetary donation to Baby Basics Northampton
Please scan the QR Code to visit Baby Basics Northampton's Local Giving page.

For further information on the work of Baby Basics Northampton, please visit our Facebook page: @BabyBasicsNorthampton. Charity Number: 1168449

Children and Youth Missioner's Update

Thanks to the generosity of many of you, we have been able to fill 32 Christmas Shoeboxes which are now on their way to children who may otherwise not receive any Christmas presents this year. Eight people met at the Church Rooms on Saturday 21st October to fill some of the boxes and it was a happy time, knowing that these gifts will



bring much joy to many children. Abington Guides and Brownies also provided some shoeboxes and money to cover the cost of the transport. We plan to track one of the boxes so we will be able to let you know in a couple of months where the boxes were sent. Thank you, in particular, to Alison Canfield who led this outreach opportunity.

On Thursday 26th October we took 11 young people from the church, including three Guides, to Tenpin Bowling for an afternoon of fun and food! Last year we took three young people, so this year there was definitely more competition for those bowling! The top players were Liam Menzies and Olly Tallack! Thank you to Revd. Tracy for organising this event.

The children and young people in the church and those attending Little Fishes have been given Advent calendars to enjoy in the weeks up to Christmas. The calendars include a book about the Story of Christmas, as well as puzzles, challenges and chocolate!

As I write this we are looking forward to the Christmas services, especially the Christingle service on Sunday 10th December at 3 pm. On this day there will be no Junior Church, as we hope the families will want to support the Christingle service in the afternoon. Everyone is very welcome to join us for this informal and participative service. There will be a collection in support of the work of The Children's Society.

Similarly on Christmas Eve, there won't be a Junior Church at 10 am as we look forward to welcoming families and friends to our Christmas Crib service at 3 pm. Children are very welcome to come dressed up as a character from the Nativity story.

Cathy Tinsley,

Children and Youth Missioner (children@abingtonchurch.org.uk)

Supporting Children's Society

Thank you very much to our box-holders who, in 2023, collected a total of £327.32 for the good work of The Children's Society.



Your generosity is much appreciated. If you would like a collecting box to support this wonderful charity, do have a word with either Cathy or Dorothy.

News from the Pastoral Team

The Pastoral Team continues to support parishioners through regular telephone calls, prayer, and pastoral visits. Home Communion is available too. If you, or anyone you know, would like someone from the pastoral team to get in touch, please contact Liz Kelly, Lay Pastoral Minister and Anna Chaplain. Her contact details are lizmk@outlook.com and telephone 01604 636947 or 07745 604591. We offer a listening ear, someone to pray with, bereavement support, or a friendly visit. Thank you all for your prayers for the Pastoral Team, and for the staff and residents of Abington Park View and St Christopher's Care Homes.

News from Abington Park View Care Home

On 1st November, Revd Jun celebrated Holy Communion for All Saints Day, accompanied by Jackie and Liz. Thirteen residents joined us in the garden lounge, and we took communion to three residents in their rooms.

Then on 15th November, the team of Janice, Kate and Liz held a Remembrance Service. Several residents shared their memories of being children in the Second World War and spoke about rationing, relatives who served in the Armed Forces, and seeing the orange glow over Coventry when it was bombed in 1940. Janet told us about her father who found a cross in the bombed-out cathedral, took it home and then years later returned it, having kept it safe until then. We also talked about the bravery of conscientious objectors who served as ambulance drivers and stretcher bearers in the First World War.

There is a Messy Vintage Service on 6th December with a Christmas theme. We shall think about the story of the wise men coming from the East to worship baby Jesus and we shall make bright stars like this one.



The last visit of the year will be for the Carol Service on 20th December. This is always a most enjoyable occasion and the residents enjoy singing many of their favourite carols and hearing the message of the Christmas story once again.

Mother's Union

Mother's Union Christmas Get Together is on Tuesday 5th December, at 2.30pm in St Ragener's Chapel at St Christopher's. It will be lovely to meet for fellowship and some festive fun. We hope you will be able to join us.

Parish Quiz Night: Thank you

Thank you to all those who contributed to organizing Parish Quiz Night! It was lovely to get together for fellowship and for fun. Many congratulations to Mace, John and Melissa's parents.



Christmas Charities

This Advent and Christmas season, we are supporting two charities: **Christians Against Poverty** and **Read Easy**. During Advent we will be hearing about the important works of these two charities.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) works together with local churches to tackle the causes of poverty and provide free debt help and community groups.

Read Easy started, knowing that 2.4 million adults in England alone cannot read at all or can barely read. They are committed to making literacy skills available for all adults to fulfill their potential and live life to the full.

If you would like to make donations for these charities then please use the yellow envelope and write down, Christmas Charities.

Christmas Carol Service at St. Christopher's: Friday 22nd December at 2.30 pm

There will be a carol service at St. Christopher's Chapel on Friday 22nd December at 2.30 pm. If you would like to support this, please do let Rev. Jun or Tim know.

[Draft Minutes from the last PCC Meeting](#)

Please click the title above to access the link.

Charitable Giving

We are pleased to inform you that we raised a total of £650 for our Harvest Festival Appeal for USPG. We have also received £323, which is 50% of the sponsorship we raised for the Ride and Stride Event. Thank you so much for your generosity and support.

Zoom Compline

This is a weekly service at 7.00pm on Tuesdays. In case you don't know, Compline is a quiet, reflective service at the end of the day and includes an open prayer time, so we are able to continue to support one another. The joining details are: Meeting I.D. 815 8020 8528. Passcode 409450 Please talk to Liz Kelly if you want to know more about this and to receive a weekly invitation by email, which enables one-click joining. Her contact details are: lizmk@outlook.com or telephone on 07745 604591.

How to get your contribution or event into the next Abington Newsletter

Please send content to Matthew George, **not** to his personal email address, but to abingtonbulletin@outlook.com by the 21st of the month for guaranteed inclusion in the next edition. If you send it after the 21st, it may not be included. If you wish to have a printed version delivered to you, please contact Bob Purser 785836. There will also be a small number of copies in church for visitors.

www.abingtonchurch.org.uk

If you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter from Abington Church, please email bob.purser@abingtonchurch.org.uk