



Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Abington
- the Church in the Park -
**Welcome to our February Newsletter
2023**

Rector's Pastoral Letter

Dear friends,

I wonder how you started off your new year? For me, one of the things that marked the beginning of the year was the farewell service for Bishop Donald who led our Diocese over the last 13 years.

This was a personally meaningful occasion for me because it was Bishop Donald who brought me from Korea to England. I first met him 13 years ago at my theological college in Seoul. He had been just appointed as the new Diocesan Bishop of Peterborough and I was an Ordinand in my final year. Two years later we met again and I felt humbled when he told me that he looked forward to seeing me in Peterborough. But that is another story for another time. And I was only one of numerous people whose lives were touched and changed by him. It wasn't a surprise when I saw the Cathedral was packed.

His final sermon was based on Hebrew 1.1-11 which he simply took from the lectionary as he always does. It included this passage.

*'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;*

*they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like clothing;*

*like a cloak you will roll them up,
and like clothing they will be changed.*

*But you are the same
and your years will never end.'*

The whole service was very moving. I was particularly struck by the final bit of the service. After giving the blessing, he took off his mitre (Bishop's hat), his vestments and laid his pastoral staff (called as the Crosier) on the altar. After laying down everything on him that symbolised his episcopal responsibility, he walked down the aisle of the Cathedral alone while 'Sheep May Safely Graze,' was playing on the organ. Just like that, he was no longer the Bishop of Peterborough. The staff, the mitre was no longer his.

It made me think about my ministry here in Abington. I said, my ministry. But is it really mine? Or is it what God allowed me to carry for a certain amount of time? Sometimes it is easy to think that our titles, our responsibility and our jobs are what define us. But those are not ours and therefore they do not and cannot define us. Those are the things that one day we will have to take off and lay down before God for the next generation. What is ours then? And what are the things that can truly define who we are?

For Bishop Donald, it was not his nice mitre, nor his shiny garments, nor his golden crosier but his faith and trust in Jesus. He was no longer the bishop but he was and still is a follower of Jesus, a child of God, a sinner redeemed by the blood of Christ on the cross.

As he was walking down the aisle of the large Cathedral alone, for me it felt like as if he was not walking alone but following Jesus who was walking just in front of him. He was not retiring but moving to the next chapter of his story with Jesus. It was an end but a new beginning at the same time because Jesus who is the Alpha and Omega was leading him. And as 'Sheep May Safely Graze' filled the Cathedral gently, Donald looked quite happy to leave his flock, knowing that the flock was safe in the hands of Jesus, the Great Shepherd himself.

Back to Hebrew's passage.

*'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;*

*they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like clothing;*

*like a cloak you will roll them up,
and like clothing they will be changed.*

*But you are the same
and your years will never end.'*

Like Donald did, we too will have to lay down our responsibilities and titles before God. But it won't be an end. It will be a new beginning. For we too will have Jesus who will lead us to the next chapter of our story. Everything in the world will be changed. But He remains the same. His years will never end.

A few days ago, Donald wrote a letter of farewell to us. Let me share this with you and conclude my letter to you. God bless you all.

Dear friends

I write just a fortnight after my wonderful farewell service when many kind things were said. I simply want to say a huge Thank You to so many people for being there and for contributing both to that event and to the lovely gifts you gave me. Thank you especially (if I dare) to the Cathedral vergers and musicians, to bellringers around the diocese, to the Bishops' Office staff who thought up and sourced those gifts and organised the catering, to the many people who wrote in my farewell book, and the children who contributed their lovely pictures and messages. Thank you.

We have spent the last fortnight sorting, packing, and "downsizing" a lifetime's collection of books, music, and much else, as we prepare to move from The Palace to our two-bedroom flat in Edinburgh. That has been a challenge! Tomorrow (Monday 23 January) our removers arrive to load up. On Tuesday we actually move away and to a new life.

People have asked "Do you have to move away?" Moving is painful. This is my sixth church job, and we've moved away after each one, so in a sense we are used to it - though it seems a bit harder at retirement. There is no absolute rule, but it is a convention for clergy who are paid and live in church property to move right away from where they have ministered, and I think it is a wise one. I should have no influence on the process of choosing my successor, no opportunity to comment on his or her policies, and no availability to any who want to complain about the changes a new Bishop will inevitably bring. So I shall be well out of the way, but still missing the places and people I have grown to love. This was part of the deal when I signed on as a curate in 1976, and it is right.

It is also something of a model or picture of the Christian life. We are "citizens of heaven", and here "we have no abiding city" (read up

Ephesians and Hebrews if those words don't ring any bells). As I tried to say a fortnight ago, our fellowship, affection, unity are all in Jesus - and we can never be separated from him.

*So, with love, in Jesus,
thank you, and bless you.*

Donald



This Month's Prayer Topic

Prayer for Christian Unity*

You made us, God, in your own image,
And then became one of us, proud of those you have made.
Make us proud of being part of that worldwide family,
And eager to discover and celebrate your image
In every person, every culture, every nation that we are privileged to
encounter.
We ask in Jesus name. Amen.

*Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from 18th to 25th
January.

This month's preachers

5th February, 3 before Lent: Liz Kelly

12th February, 2 before Lent: Rosemary Camp (Open Doors Charity)

19th February, 1 before Lent: Alison Barnes

22nd February, Ash Wednesday: Revd. Tracy Pegram

26th February, Lent 1: Revd. Jun Kim

5th March, Lent 2: Prester Coleman

12th March, Lent 3: Revd. Jun Kim

19th March, Lent 4: Prester Coleman

Readers and Intercessors for this month

5th February, 3 before Lent: Readers: Rhiannon & Matthew George

Intercessor: Jenny Parkin

12th February, 2 before Lent: Readers: Sue Harrison & Peter Gompertz

Intercessor: Bob Purser

19th February, 1 before Lent: Readers: Ken Hunter & Hilary Hodge

Intercessor: Alan Sutton

22nd February, Ash Wednesday: Readers: John Langley & Liz Kelly

Intercessor: Alison Barnes

26th February, Lent 1: Readers: TBC

Intercessor: TBC

New Sermon Series: the Power of Prayer and Prayer Ministry Group

We are pleased to introduce you a new 4 week sermon series during Lent on the Power of Prayers. Some of you might remember that we had a sermon series on prayers 3 years ago where we said the pocket prayer together. That series was interrupted by the Pandemic. Although we picked it up again later.

This new series focuses on what prayers can bring and what can happen when we pray for each other. This is part of a new ministry initiative: Prayer Ministry Group that we hope to introduce in March. This Prayer Ministry Group is about encouraging the culture of praying for each other regularly.

We are looking forward to sharing more about this new initiative with you very soon.

Children and Youth Missioner's Update

Christmas seems a long time ago! However it was a very joyful and busy time! All the children and family events were well supported and seemed to be appreciated and enjoyed.

Advent calendars were given to 60 children who, I am sure, enjoyed both the chocolates and the Christmas story book.

The 'Make your Own' Christingle service on 11th December attracted 56 people (22 children) and 120 people (40 children) attended the Crib service on Christmas Eve. Thank you to everyone who took part in both these services and especially to **Katie and Clarissa** who were Mary and Joseph.



I hope some of you did the 'Christmas Trail' that was erected in the church yard during December? Thank you to **Susie McKay** for producing this excellent Christmas story, entitled 'The Shepherds' Tale'. It is wonderful that the mission of the Church extends outside our beautiful church building for all to experience. The Nativity crib stones on the table tomb also created some interest!



January has been a busy time in **Junior Church** which is excellent! It is quite crowded in the choir vestry at times but this is wonderful challenge for us to address!

Similarly it was lovely to welcome 15 children to **Little Fishes** when reopened at the beginning of January. However seasonal colds and viruses do affect the number of children that come, week on week!

Looking forward we are having a Children and Young People's meeting on 27th January when we will be planning activities for the coming year.

We are planning to have a **Family Afternoon in the churchyard on Monday 29th May** from 2 – 4 pm with a couple of bouncy castles and other activities for all to enjoy. This will be a free event to which everyone will be invited. Hopefully children visiting the park with their families will want to join us!

We also hope to organise a **Parish Outing** during the summer months to which everyone (young and not so young!) will be invited...more information to follow shortly.

Finally if anyone would like to be involved in the children and youth work here at Abington, even on a very occasional basis, do please see me. We have a great team of supporters but there is always room for more!



Cathy Tinsley **Tel. 07516979223** or children@abingtonchurch.org.uk

Lent Charities: Open Doors and Baby Basics

The PCC have decided to support two charities during this Lent: Open Doors and Baby Basics.

Open Doors is a Christian charity that supports especially those who are living under persecutions and threats because of their faith in Jesus. They arrange letters of comfort and encouragements from across the world to be sent to Christians who are imprisoned. They organise aid work and packs for those who are excluded from receiving aids because of their faith in hostile countries. And they work with underground churches to let them know that they are not forgotten, that they belong to one big family of God. We will have a guest speaker from **Open Doors** on **Sunday the 12th of February**.

Baby Basics is a local charity that helps mums and their new born babies. The Community and Outreach Committee decided to work with Baby Basics throughout the year. Melissa will share more information about our vision with you on **Sunday the 19th of February**.

Readers and Intercessors

Alison Barnes will be putting together the next rota for readers and intercessors very soon. If you would like to be added to the list of people offering to read the lessons or lead the intercessions, please speak to Alison after a service, or to any member of the Ministry Team.

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

Please click the title above to access the link.

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 shall be able to continue to support one another as we have become used to over the last two years. 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.

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 7th December 2022, Liz, accompanied by Jackie and Kate, held a Home Communion Service for the residents by taking in the reserved sacrament. Then on 21st December, Liz and Tracy held the annual Carol Service in the Dining Room. We were joined by twelve residents, two members of staff, and a relative. Everyone enjoyed singing familiar carols and hearing the nativity story

from St Luke's Gospel. The gifts for the carers were presented at the start of the service and were much appreciated.

Rev'd Jun, supported by Liz, celebrated Holy Communion with the residents on 4th January 2023 and spoke about the New Year and Epiphany. Unfortunately, the Songs of Praise Service planned for 18th January was cancelled because of Covid. However, everyone is now looking forward to the next Messy Vintage Service on 1st February.

Developing Space around the Baptismal Font

We are planning to develop the space around the font into a place where we can communicate about our Outreach work and News about the Parish. If you are a creative person or if you like seeing things tidied up, then perhaps you can help? Please speak to Tracy, our Curate or Melissa.

Mothers Union

Abington Church Mothers' Union AGM meeting is on Saturday 18th February at 2 pm at St Ragener's Chapel at St Christopher's Home. All members and friends of the branch are warmly invited to attend. We will be discussing with you future plans for the branch, including the details of the programme for 2023. After the meeting there will be a time of fellowship and refreshments.



Please would you let us know if you hope to join us. Thank you.

Sue Harrison (07702 869734) and Jenny Mercer (07880 635074)

Next PCC and Standing Committee Meetings

- PCC meetings*: 1 March, 3 May, 19 July, 20 September, 29 November
- Standing Committee*: 29 March, 28 June, 6 September, 8 November

*All on Wednesdays at 7.45 pm

- APCM: Sunday 23 April after the 10 am service
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Regular Giving

Christian giving is the regular financial commitment of church members to the work of Abington Parish Church. Stewardship has been part of our life at Abington for many years and we now use the Parish Giving Scheme, run by a partnership of Dioceses, as the best of collecting and managing our giving.

For this reason, we no longer pass a collection plate at Services, but visitors are welcome to contribute to the life of the church either through the Card Reader by the font, by using the link on the Church website. or through yellow envelopes in the pews which along with cash can be placed on the plate or in the wall-safe.

For a Parish Giving Scheme form or for further information on Christian giving, please speak to Damian Pickard or Bob Purser.

How to get your contribution or event in to the next Newsletter

Please send content to Matthew George on 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. There will be January edition, so the next Parish Newsletter will be February's edition. 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.

Ministry Team

Rector: The Revd. Byung-Jun Kim, rector@abingtonchurch.org.uk

Associate Priest: The Revd. Rachel Hetherington

Curate: The Revd. Tracy Pegram curate@abingtonchurch.org.uk

Readers: Alison Barnes, Prester Coleman

Lay Pastoral Minister & Anna Chaplain: Liz Kelly

Children and Youth Missioner: Cathy Tinsley

Director of Music: Tim Dolan

Churchwardens: Donald Loe and Jim Mercer

Lay Chair of the PCC: Bob Purser

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bob.purser@abingtonchurch.org.uk