



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

Curate's letter

As I write this, I am aware of an important email landing in my inbox outlining the process of assessment for the end of my first year of curacy. We were warned back in September that this would come around quickly, and they weren't wrong!

So I find myself at a point of reflecting backwards and forwards. So much has happened during my first year of ordained ministry. I have found myself being warmly welcomed and encouraged by a truly loving church family (you!) and have been growing into the role of liturgical deacon during our Sunday worship. Being with you through Advent and Christmas was lovely, and I especially enjoyed the Christmas Eve nativity play. I am also looking forward to my first Lenten journey in the parish, and experiencing Easter with you, which I am sure will be here in no time at all.

A key area of my training during this first year of curacy has been funeral ministry. Like all curates, it is important to learn how the process of cremation and burial happens, and to experience being alongside those who are deeply grieving. The Church of England's funeral service is a wonderful framework allowing people to say goodbye and entrust their loved one to God's eternal care whilst making room for personal expression. I have had the privilege to minister to local people, some of whom have deep connections to Abington, and the death of the late Queen Elizabeth provided a unique opportunity to reflect on the role of the church within the mourning of a nation.

I have also enjoyed working with our local schools, both in supporting the work of Sharing God's Gifts, providing assemblies and welcoming the children into the church over Christmas (Covid permitting!) The response from our local schools has been wonderful and they are very keen to develop the link with the church and to make the most of what we can bring to enrich their religious

education curriculum. I am looking forward to visiting Bridgewater School again in the run up to Easter, where we will be sharing and exploring the Easter story with the children.

Looking forward, my training moves onto weddings and we are blessed to have a few coming up. Jun is very generous in providing lots of opportunities to learn from him, as well as encouraging me to learn independently. This is another important area of ministry and I know that Church of England research shows just how many people the Church reaches through attendance at weddings, so they provide important missional opportunities and it matters that they are done well. I have lots to learn but I am very excited to be moving into this area.

The other big part of the forthcoming year is my ordination as Priest, due to take place on June 25th and there will be more to say about that as the time draws nearer, but I am already wondering how it will feel to preside at the Eucharist for the first time. It is a great comfort to know that I am amongst such loving and caring people here in Abington and I know that I can depend on you for prayer and encouragement as ordination approaches – thank you!

In the meantime, my curate's portfolio is due mid-March, which is a collection of reflections, journals, feedback and an essay, and is provided to the Bishop ahead of his decision to ordain me. Whilst I am sad the Bishop Donald, who has been so important in my journey so far, will not be here to ordain me, it is a joy that Bishop John will. So far, Bishop John has overseen my training as a Children's Minister, a Lay Pastoral Minister and has ordained me as Deacon, so it is rather nice that he will be there at this next step.

So please remember me and the other Deacons preparing for ordination as Priests this summer, and I do hope that many of you will join me at the Cathedral or online – details to follow.

With all good wishes

Tracy

Letter from Bridgewater Primary School

You may remember we had a campaign last year around Harvest. Children and families received vouchers for their Christmas toys, supermarket shopping, school uniforms, new shoes, ice cream treat at the park and a family meal out at the Park Café. We worked together with our local schools. One of the local schools recently has sent a letter to say thank you. Well done everyone and thank you.

Dear people of the Church in the Park

We just wanted to pass on our sincere thanks for the most generous Christmas gifts you and your parish kindly gave to some of the children at Bridgewater Primary School.

Parents were overwhelmed with the kind and generous gifts. One parent who received one of the £100 supermarket voucher shared

'I am so grateful for this voucher; it means I can now give my children the Christmas they deserve'.

Another parent who was gifted the Park cafe voucher shared that their family had not had something to look forward to for so long and they were really excited at the thought of having a family outing. Another parent was very thankful for the toy store voucher as they could only afford a few small presents for their child.

Once again Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

Bridgewater Primary School

Letter from Children's Society

Another letter of thanks is from The Children's Society whom we supported through our Christmas giving campaign.

Dear St. Peter and St. Paul, Abington

Thank you so much for your Christingle celebration and this amazing donation of £750. It is thanks to the money raised in churches and congregation like St. Peter and St. Paul, Abington that we are able to be

here for children and young people when they need us the most. We are so grateful to you for standing alongside us.

Your support really does change lives. When you attend a Christingle service, you are standing alongside young people and letting them know that a brighter future is possible.

Last year more than 2,000 celebrations raised nearly £600,000 for children and young people. Every penny raised at your Christingle helps change lives. Thank you once again for Christingling with us to make a difference.

Yours Sincerely

The Children's Society

This Month's Prayer Topic

There are two prayers that we would like to encourage you to use during this Lent. One is a prayer during Lent. As we focus on deepening our discipleship, you may find this prayer helpful.

Prayer during Lent

*Draw us closer to your heart Lord,
so that we might know you better and understand you more completely.
We pray that we would not only give things up for Lent
but also give you glory through Lent.
May our actions reflect our hearts,
and may we worship you through all that we say and do
throughout the day.
Amen.*

But sometimes, it is helpful to have a prayer that we can say at anytime wherever we are. A prayer that just help us to simply talk to God. So here is the pocket prayer for you which you can say in your car, in your bed, even at your work.

The Pocket Prayer

God, you are good.

I need help.

So do they.

Thank you.

Amen.

This month's preachers

During Lent we will be focusing our message on Prayer and what power your prayers have. This will lead into a new ministry initiative, Prayer Ministry Group.

Lent 1: Praying in a storm, Jun (26 Feb)

Lent 2: Learning to pray with St. Peter, Prester (5 Mar)

Lent 3: Would you be the Someone?, Jun (12 Mar)

*Lent 4: Guest speaker from Baby Basics (Mothering Sunday, 19 Mar)

Lent 5: Learning to pray with St. Paul, Prester (26 Mar)

Children and Youth Missioner's Update

As I write this article the half term holiday is nearly over. Hopefully many of you with children will have enjoyed some time off together and are now ready again for school! In **Junior Church** today we heard about visits to see family, weekends away, future holidays and even meeting the King! (If you want to know more about this do ask **Alicia and Liam!**)



On Monday 13th February nine of the '**Little Fishes**' families enjoyed visiting the church after a short walk to see the birds and playing in the children's play area. It was a really lovely morning and, for many, it was the first time they had been to the church. The children enjoyed exploring the building and then we had refreshments in the Lady Chapel

and finished our time together singing 'This Little Light of Mine' (just like we do

when we meet at the Rooms). The morning was such a success that hopefully we will do this again more regularly after Easter.

Little Fishes also celebrated its first anniversary at the end of February. The church has had a Tots group for over thirty years but this group started anew after the pandemic. Eleven families enjoyed making little fishes, decorating (and eating) birthday biscuits and learning about the story of Jesus and Peter 'Fishing for People'!

We are looking forward to **Mothering Sunday on 19th March** when we will be joined by some of the girls, and their leaders, from **Rainbows, Brownies and Guides**. Thank you in advance to the Guides who will be making the posies for the service.



Two family events are being planned for Holy Week and Easter. On **Maundy Thursday (6th April)** there will be a family event in church from 10 am to 11 am when we will be remembering what Jesus did on this special day. There will be activities and crafts for children to enjoy. Then on **Easter Eve (Saturday 8th April)** we will meet again in church for more Easter activities including an **Easter Egg Hunt in the church yard**. We will meet from 3.30 pm to 4.30 pm. These two events are open for all children so please invite any family you think might be interested. It would help with planning if you could let me know if you, or a family you have invited, are likely to come along. Similarly if you would like to help with these events, I would love to hear from you.

Cathy Tinsley Tel. 07516 979223 or children@abingtonchurch.org.uk

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.

Dates to note

Saturday the 11th of March: Lent Lunches at 12 pm at the Church Rooms

Saturday the 18th of March: Bishop's Bible Day at 10 am,
Northampton High School Newport Pagnell Road Hardingstone NN4 6UU

Monday the 27th of March: Community and Outreach Committee
At Melissa's at 7.30 pm

Sunday the 2nd of April: Palm Sunday Service Procession
in front of the Museum in the park at 10 am

Bishop's Bible Day 2023

The Bishop's Bible Day is day for everyone to explore the Bible together. All are welcome. Why not invite your whole Church.

For many people the psalms are amongst their favourite bible passages and this day gives us an opportunity to find out more about two special psalms. Come and discover what it means to sing The Lord is my Shepherd.

We're thrilled that our speaker this year is one of the most exciting speakers in the country, The Revd Dr Isabelle Hamley. She is a former Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the author of last year's popular and accessible Lent Book "Embracing Justice", and currently Theological Adviser to the House of Bishops. Isabelle will give the two keynote addresses. One on the Shepherd's, Psalm 23" and the other on Psalm 137 "By the rivers of Babylon", made famous by Boney M! There will also be a range of practical and interactive workshops. Before you go home, there is even an opportunity to ask Isabelle questions and grill the bishop.

We are delighted that this year we are able to offer you not only hot drinks throughout the day, but also a cold lunch. We would ask that you make what contribution you can towards the cost of this, and the day as a whole, when you book. The cost to the diocese is approximately £20 per person, but we do not expect you to pay this much, unless you wish.

We suggest bringing a water bottle. Water machines are available at the school.

Enquiries to: nuala.salter@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

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

Please click the title above to access the link.

Dates of Next PCC and Standing Committee Meetings

APCM: Sun 23 April after the service

PCC: 3 May, 19 July, 20 Sep, 29 Nov

SC: 29 Mar, 28 June, 6 Sep, 8 Nov

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

Everyone enjoyed the Messy Vintage service on 1st February which celebrated Candlemas. We read the story of Simeon and Anna meeting the baby Jesus in the temple in Jerusalem and then each resident, assisted by a volunteer from Abington Church, used coloured cellophane, tissue paper, stickers, and ribbons



to make a decorated lantern to represent the light of Christ shining in the world.

Then on 15th February, we thought about the meaning of love and Valentine's Day at the monthly Songs of Praise Service. All the hymns mentioned love and we listened to St Paul's beautiful account of love from 1 Corinthians 13, followed by the story from St John's Gospel of Jesus attending a wedding at Cana. Everyone shared their memories of weddings and Valentines and we learned about God's amazing

generosity. The service ended by everyone singing along to the Beatles hit song. 'All You need Is Love.'

This is a picture of the altar we set up for the afternoon. Before we left we enjoyed a cup of tea and a delicious cake with the residents.

Mothers Union

Following a very successful AGM of which 12 members attended at St Christopher's on Saturday 18 February 2023, we now have 24 paid up Members which is wonderful. We have a number of meetings booked over the next few months on the 25 March 2023 at St Albans which is our Lady Day Service. The following are all at St Ragener's Chapel at St Christopher's to which all are very welcome - 16 May 2023 2:30pm, 8 July 2023 – outside if weather permits, 23 September 2023 and 5 December 2023

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 into the next Abington 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. 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