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

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### **Prayer for King Charles III**

Almighty God, we give you thanks for Charles, your servant and our King, for his devotion to his family, nation, Commonwealth and the Earth. We thank you for his faith in you, his love for all people and for his call to be our sovereign.

Bless him and all who are in authority under him; that they may order all things in wisdom and equity, righteousness and peace, to the honour and glory of your name and the good of your Church and people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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### **Easter Message by the Revd. Tracy Pegram (Curate)**

Easter morning – a morning of extraordinary revelation – a morning of light, a morning of rejoicing!

Our Lenten journey of reflection and self-examination, preparing ourselves, is ended. We have journeyed through Holy week, and have now arrived at what is the most magnificent day in the life of the church.

And it centres around the empty tomb. The tomb at which, a few days ago, Mary, the disciples and Jesus' followers watched as Jesus' body was wrapped in linen grave clothes and placed inside.

Not that long ago, we were here talking about Jesus' birth. When he was wrapped in bands of cloth, and laid in a manger. We thought then of what Jesus' birth said about God. God with us, born into this world as a lowly, vulnerable baby – not born into wealth and power with the trappings of

earthly royalty, but born as a servant king. Pointing us to a God who does not overpower, coerce or rule through fear, but a God who loves, invites and participates in our reality with us.

We have heard, over the intervening weeks, of Jesus' teaching – how he lived, how he healed, how he demonstrated loving one another; and we heard about what the kingdom of God is like. Not just lovely stories, but insights into who God is, how God is, and who we are to God.

And, over this last week, we have travelled with Jesus, from his triumphant arrival into Jerusalem – heralded as the Messiah – the one people had been waiting so long for, the one who was to restore God's people to their rightful place – restoring their place in the world, and restoring their relationship with God. And yet, how things turned about. Within a week, Jesus is humiliated, beaten, and despite being found guilty of no crime, hung on a cross and left to die.

And now, this morning, we find the tomb in which he was laid is empty.

Where has Jesus gone? Let us pause for a moment with Mary, Simon Peter and the nameless disciple whom Jesus loves.

The disciples had scattered, one had betrayed Jesus, playing a critical role in his arrest and death, another, Simon Peter, had repeatedly denied knowing Jesus in spite of being warned he would do just that. Mary Magdalene had not long ago shown her love for Jesus, and now she is in the depths of grief.

When we look back over the gospel accounts, we see Jesus preparing the disciples for these events, foretelling his death, foretelling his resurrection, and showing them where the scriptures foretold these things too. And as we look on, we might ask how do they not get it? But then, do we really get it?

People don't just rise from the dead – usually. In the Old Testament we find an account of Elijah -the prophet asking God to restore the life of Zarephath's son (1 Kings 17:17-24), and the prophet Elisha praying over the son of the Shunammite woman, with success. (2 Kings 4:18-37) We even find a dead man being restored to life after he is placed in Elisha's tomb (2 Kings 13:20-21). But these accounts of bringing the dead to life are extraordinary, and they show the power that God clearly has over death, and demonstrate the righteousness of his appointed prophets.

In the New Testament, we see Jesus restoring the life of the widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11-17) and raising Jarius' daughter to life (Luke 8:49-56), and we cannot forget the moving account of Jesus raising his friend Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38-44). You might recall that when Jesus arrived, Lazarus had

been in the tomb for four days. Jesus was greatly distressed at the death of his friend, but in a revelation of who he was said “I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes in me, even though they die will live.” (John 11:25) Jesus commands Lazarus to come out of his tomb, and out he comes, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face covered. Jesus commands that he be unbound and let go.

So we know that Jesus too has the ability to raise people from the dead, just like the prophets – but let’s look closely and we will see that the empty tomb reveals to us a profound truth about who Jesus is.

Notice that in our reading today, the writer of John’s gospel goes to great lengths to draw our attention to what the disciples see when they first arrive at the tomb.

The disciple whom Jesus loves outruns Peter and arrives at the tomb first. “He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.” (John 20:5-7)

In every other resurrection story, from Zarephath’s son to Lazarus, someone else was involved. Elijah, Elisha, Jesus – someone other than the dead person prayed, interceded, implored God to show mercy. But here, there is no-one. No prophet needed. Jesus was alone in that tomb. He didn’t need someone else to tell him to come out, he wasn’t still bound by his grave clothes needing to be unwrapped. The linen wrappings lie there, Jesus acted alone.

This difference is immense, because it shows the disciples, the authorities, the world, and us, that Jesus doesn’t just resurrect – Jarius’ daughter, the widow’s son, his friend Lazarus – he **IS** the resurrection. In Jesus himself, death is overcome, the bindings of the grave are loosed and within Jesus himself is the resurrection.

And this is huge for us – because this is what Jesus has been talking about – over and over again. “I am the resurrection and the life” Jesus says – and here, in the empty tomb – Jesus does. “Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.”

God, the Father, Son and Spirit, the three in one who we marvel at as we mark the incarnation at the birth of Jesus, God who draws us to himself within the humanity of Jesus – Jesus who is born, lives and dies, a human life of vulnerability, struggle, pain and hardship, takes us in his humanity, through the

grave to resurrection. “Everyone who lives and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:26)

This is hard to understand, hard to communicate, and that’s because it is massive. The breadth and depth of God’s love for us has been shown in Jesus – born for us, living for us, dying for us, rising for us. And I think that God shows that he knows this is hard for us to understand. As Jesus leaves the grave clothes behind and steps from the tomb, he shows that he IS the resurrection, and through appearing to Mary and his disciples he demonstrates the reality of that resurrection – they can see him, they hear that familiar voice, they see the familiar acts, they receive Jesus’ care and compassion for them in their confusion.

If you find this difficult to understand, or even to believe, please know that you’re not alone. Even the disciples had problems believing until they saw. But believing is the point, and when we find that belief we find ourselves resting in Jesus, resting in that incredible promise:

“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

Amen.

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### **Easter Prayers by the Revd. Jenny Parkin**

Through our risen Lord Jesus we have a living hope which will never spoil or fade. As we celebrate the new life of resurrection let us bring our needs and the needs of this world to our Saviour.

Risen Lord, we pray for your Church throughout the world, for all who live and share the Easter message. Particularly today for the episcopal church of Sudan. We pray your blessing on this church in the park; on Jun, Tracy and all who share their ministry with us. Strengthen our faith as we seek to serve you in this place.

Risen Lord, we pray for your world; for all places where there is hunger or conflict. We continue to pray for the people of Ukraine & for an end to Russian aggression. We pray for the ordinary people of Russia and for all who live under oppressive regimes. We pray for the peace of Jerusalem, that Christians, Jews and Muslims may live in mutual respect. We pray that the world’s resources may be shared more fairly.

Risen Lord, We give you thank for our families and friends and we pray for this community, for all who will visit Abington park this weekend, that they may remember the prayer ribbons they tied on the railings last year, that they may know the enduring power of your love Keep us looking outward in your name.

Risen Lord, your love is unconditional and your compassion knows no bounds. We pray for all who are homeless, all who suffer, all who are bereaved, all those waiting anxiously for hospital appointments. For all who have asked for our prayers. Help them to rest in your strength and surround them with your healing love.

Risen Lord, We thank you for lives well lived, and commend to your keeping those who have died recently, and all those we love and see no longer. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Risen Lord, we thank you for the precious gift of new life; may we never again take it for granted, but live each moment in the fullness of life that you have gained for us.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

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### **This month's preachers**

**7<sup>th</sup> May, Coronation (Easter 5):** Revd Jun Kim

**14<sup>th</sup> May, Easter 6:** Revd Tracy Pegram, Curate

**21<sup>st</sup> May, Ascension:** Liz Kelly

**28<sup>th</sup> May, Pentecost:** Revd Jenny Parkin

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### **Readers and Intercessors for this month**

**7<sup>th</sup> May, Easter 5: Readers:** Sue Harrison & Peter Gompertz

**Intercessor:** Prester Coleman

**14<sup>th</sup> May, Easter 6: Readers:** Ken Hunter & Hilary Hodge

**Intercessor:** Matthew George

**21<sup>st</sup> May, Ascension: Readers:** Hugh Kent & Liz Kelly

**Intercessor:** Rhiannon George

**28<sup>th</sup> May, Pentecost: Readers:** Eric May & John Langley

**Intercessor:** Peter Gompertz

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## Children and Youth Missioner's Update

**Thank you to everyone** who came and supported the **Easter Activities Afternoon on Easter Eve**. We enjoyed some crafts together, took part in the Good Friday Story and then celebrated Easter by finishing with an Easter Egg Hunt! It was a lovely afternoon of fellowship and it was an excellent opportunity to welcome a few visitors from the park who came and joined us.



**Easter Sunday** was also a time of celebration in **Junior Church**. Not only did we welcome 16 children, we also had four chicks visit us! Thank you to **Ali and Paul Canfield** who were in charge of the chicks! They certainly were popular with the children!

**Little Fishes** had a break over Easter but reopened on **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April**.

Due to a number of Bank Holidays in May, the group will only be open for families on **15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May**. The group meets at the Rooms on Monday mornings from 10 am to 11.15 am. The families who join us are very appreciative of the warm welcome and support that they receive. If you would like to come along and see what takes place, do have a word with me. We are looking for a few more volunteers to support this group.



On **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May** we are having a **Prayer Walk**, meeting at **the church at 10.30 am** for about an hour. Prior to this day, the children will be preparing 'prayer stones' and these will be placed around the park for people to find and enjoy! The stones will have crowns on them to celebrate the King's Coronation. Everyone is welcome to join us for this walk which will be very relaxed and suitable for all ages and abilities. So if you fancy a bit of exercise and company do join us. We will finish our walk back at the church for refreshments.

On **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May** there will be a **Family Fun Afternoon** in the churchyard (or in the Parish Rooms if it is very wet!). This event will be from **2 pm to 4 pm** and all families (whether connected to the church or not) are very welcome to come along for some fun. There will be bouncy castles and other games for the children to enjoy. Refreshments will be available as well as an opportunity to engage with some prayer activities in the church. Why not bring a picnic tea and enjoy the afternoon with friends.

Cathy Tinsley **Tel. 07516 979223** or [children@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto:children@abingtonchurch.org.uk)

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

Please click the title above to access the link.

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### **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](mailto:lizmk@outlook.com) or telephone on 07745 604591.

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### **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](mailto: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 5<sup>th</sup> April, a team of volunteers from Abington Church joined with the residents in a Messy Vintage Service, which focussed on the Gospel story of



Peter denying Jesus three times before the cock crowed. During the craft activity, we made colourful cockerels to illustrate the story. Here are some pictures of the beautiful results.



Unfortunately, the service of Holy Communion arranged for 19<sup>th</sup> April had to be postponed because there were some cases of covid affecting the home. We look forward to going in again on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

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## **Mothers Union**

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May at 2.30 pm at St Ragener's Chapel at St Christopher's Home. Revd. Tracy Pegram will be speaking about her faith journey to ordination and beyond! We look forward to seeing as many members as possible for an afternoon of fellowship and fun. From Sue, Jenny and Cathy.

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## **Concert at the Church Rooms**

You are invited to a Concert on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 3 pm at Abington Church Rooms, on the corner of Park Avenue North and Ashburnham Road, Northampton (NN3 2HT).

Abington Wind Band, a group of over 40 musicians, will be playing popular tunes from some of the well-known films and shows, as well as marches and classical works. The group has been performing for nearly 50 years and they would love you to join them for this afternoon of wonderful music.

Entrance is by donation, and the money raised which will be given to the charity Christian Aid.



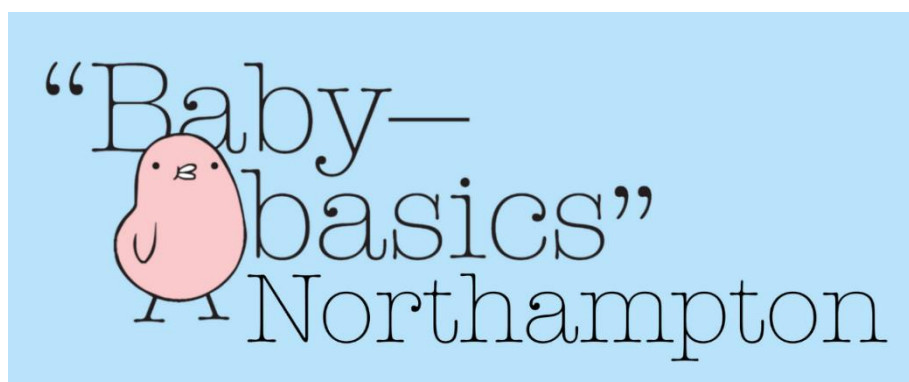
After the concert refreshments will be available.

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## Sharing of Talents Afternoon

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June we are hoping to organise an afternoon of 'Sharing of Talents' in church. Many of our church family are very talented, for example some enjoy singing, playing an instrument, reciting poetry etc. and we thought it would be lovely to provide an opportunity for sharing these gifts with others. If this is something that you would like to take part in, please would you see Cathy Tinsley (or contact me on [cathytinsley18@gmail.com](mailto:cathytinsley18@gmail.com)) by 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 so that a decision can be made whether this event takes place. Thank you very much.

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## Baby Basics need our help!

There are lots of ways you can get involved and support new Mums and Babies in need.

### Calling all knitters!

Baby blankets, jumpers and cardigans are essential. Pick up a knitting pack in church which contains a pattern and wool, or collect the knitting guidelines so that Baby Basics can use what you create.

### Volunteer at a Drop Off point

People are needed to help at various pop-up drop off points, helping to collect and process donations from the public. If you are interested in helping please sign up in church or contact us.

## Get washing!

All donated clothes need to be washed. Baby Basics will provide the items, washing pods and instructions, all you need is a washing machine and you can help. Please sign up in church or contact us if you can help in this way.

## Drive a van?

Baby Basics have funding available to source a driver who can collect donations and deliver completed baskets to their hubs. If you drive a van and think you can help (even just one day a month) please let us know by signing up in church or getting in touch with us.

**Sign up at the Outreach board in church or get in touch by speaking to Melissa or Tracy, emailing [curate@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto:curate@abingtonchurch.org.uk), or calling Tracy on 07568 923322.**

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

Please send content to Matthew George on [abingtonbulletin@outlook.com](mailto:abingtonbulletin@outlook.com) by the 21<sup>st</sup> of the month for guaranteed inclusion in the next edition. If you send it after the 21<sup>st</sup>, 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.

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## Ministry Team

Rector: The Revd. Byung-Jun Kim, [rector@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto:rector@abingtonchurch.org.uk)

Curate: The Revd. Tracy Pegram [curate@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto: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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