



St NICOLAS' CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 20 September 2020
St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

PASTORAL LETTER – 'It all goes to the taxman!'

Dear Friends

I am sure there have been occasions when we have all said those words: 'It all goes to the taxman', and have felt it unfair. I know that I dread the annual task of completing my tax return and dread equally what extra I have to pay!

Today we celebrate St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, who according to the gospel written under his name was a taxman. He was not like a modern official of the Inland Revenue: honest, if not deeply loved. He was collecting taxes or custom dues on behalf of an alien, occupying power. His occupation was despised among the Jews and he would have been numbered among the sinners by the righteous Jews at the time. Jesus, however, called Matthew to be one of his twelve apostles. The simple command of Jesus to: 'Follow me', as he passed Matthew on the road, was enough to change this taxman's life. The subsequent dinner party after the encounter brought a mixed group of guests, awkward questions from the Pharisees, and a saying that has since comforted many. The Christian faith is a religion for sinners, not for people who think they are good. It is for those who cry out in their need recognising that their lives are incomplete and empty if they do not accept the grace and abounding love of God. Today, then, what we give to this taxman, Matthew, is our thanks for reminding us of our need of Christ.

With love and blessings,

Fr Paul

WORSHIP

The Readings & Collect for St Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

Proverbs 3.13-18

Psalm 119.65-72

2 Corinthians 4.1-6

Matthew 9.9-13

Collect: O Almighty God, whose blessed Son called Matthew the tax-collector to be an apostle and evangelist: give us grace to forsake the selfish pursuit of gain and the possessive love of riches that we may follow in the way of your Son Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

CHURCH NEWS

Our Service today is Holy Communion (BCP) at 8am led by Bishop Henry Scriven

On Sunday 27 September our service will be Morning Worship at 11:15 led by Gwen Bevington

On Sunday 4 October our Service will be Holy Communion (BCP) at 8am led by the Revd David Bevington

Congregation members need to register in advance to attend a service in one of our three churches by 12 noon on the preceding Friday.

For St Nicolas:

- ❖ 8.00 am - Holy Communion (1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays) – St Nicolas' Church
Register with Peter Penfold papenfold@aol.co.uk or 01235 553411
- ❖ 11:15 am – Holy Communion (2nd) & Service of the Word (4th Sundays)
Register with Andrew Coker andrew.r.coker@gmail.com 01235 539929

Please see the [website](#) for details of how to book for all three Churches in the Parish.

We will make the 11:15am Service at St Nic's available, live, via Zoom and extracts from the Service will also be loaded onto the [St Nic's website](#) (<https://stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/download.html>) as soon as possible during the day.

Parish Opening for private prayer:

- St Nicolas': Mondays 10 am – 1 pm.
- St Helen's: Wednesdays and Saturdays 11 am – 1 pm.
- St Michael's: Thursdays 11 am – 1 pm.

CHURCH NEWS

We will be celebrating Sunday 11 October as our **Harvest Festival**. We will not, this year, be asking for donations of flowers for the church, or goods to donate. However our loose plate collection on the day will be shared between the Abingdon Food Bank and Christian Aid for the relief of hunger overseas.

The **St Nicolas Annual Church Meeting (ADCM)** will take place on Monday 12 October. Details will be issued soon, but we will be seeking nominations for Church Wardens and members of the Parochial & District Church Councils. Please consider prayerfully if you feel called, or would like to encourage anyone else to stand for one of these positions.

The **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)** will take place on Thursday, 22 October, at 7.00pm in St Michael & All Angels Church, Park Road. To book your place, please contact, Eluned, PCC Secretary, on 01235 529462, eluned@hallas.org.uk

We are hoping to produce Issue 8 of ***A Candle in the Window*** by Sunday 4th October. Please contribute by 26th September! Celebrate Harvest with artistic photos of your produce or think more broadly about fruits of the spirit or other gifts. Articles on other themes also welcome. *Thank you.*

FAITH FORUM. The next Faith Forum in the series on Other Voices: Women, Theology & the Church will be on Sunday 4 October at the slightly earlier time of 9.15am. Our speaker will be Dr Deborah Rooke, Associate Lecturer in Old Testament Hermeneutics at Regent's Park College, Oxford and Visiting Lecturer in Old Testament at St Stephen's House. Dr Rooke will be speaking on ***Women heroes of the Old Testament***. Please remember that places are limited due to social distancing measures and to be compliant with COVID regulations we must have a list of those attending. If you wish to attend please contact the parish office to book a place. For those unable to attend, the lecture will be recorded and uploaded to the parish Youtube channel.

Wednesday Holy Communion was a much appreciated service before the Lock-down. We are hoping to reinstate it as a monthly service beginning on October 14th at 10:30 in the Parish Centre. There will of course be no refreshments offered and masks will be mandatory. If you wish to attend (and numbers will be restricted) please contact Jenny in the Office; please also let others know, particularly those not able to attend on Sundays.

Morning Prayer at St Helen's Church begins on ***Monday, 7 September at 9.10am*** in the Lady Chapel. There will be assigned seats for the regular attenders; more spaces will be available nearby in the Lady Aisle. There is no plan yet to start Evening Prayer.

Parish Electoral Roll Due to recent Covid-19 lockdown the Parish Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) was postponed until 22nd October so a further revision of the Roll is required. Lay people who worship with us can join the roll if you have been baptised and are aged 16 or over. You need do nothing if you completed a form in 2019 and have no changes to contact details. Application forms are available from Eluned Hallas – Ab 529462 or eluned@hallas.org.uk.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Oxford Abseil for Christian Aid, 17 Oct 2020: Are you up for the challenge of abseiling from the tower of St Mary Magdalen church in Oxford to end poverty?

Participants must be aged eleven years or above. The registration fee is £20 and all entrants aim to raise £100 or more through sponsorship.

Contact Phil on pevans@christian-aid.org or 07814 141 812.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

- All evangelists and missionaries, all who lead the church, our bishops and clergy;
- Preparations for our annual meetings, our Wardens and all members of our Parish and District Church Councils (DCC);
- Those unable to join us physically for worship at this time;
- All those suffering, throughout the world, from the health, economic and political effects of the coronavirus;
- Residents, relatives and all the staff of the care homes in our parish, especially Old Station House and Bridge House with whom we are especially linked.

WORSHIP RESOURCES

The [Parish resources](#) page contains links to Sunday's Service at St Helen's, plus an archive of Parish resources. The [St Nicolas' website](#) will have recordings of 11:15am Services.

ONLINE:

[Diocesan Church at Home](#) (Live-streamed). The order of service, together with links to view or listen to the service will be posted on the Diocesan [website](#) on Saturday.

[Oxford Cathedral on-line services](#) (includes service booklets and sermons)

An archive of cathedral services and sermons is available on Soundcloud

<https://soundcloud.com/user-867515242>

BY TELEPHONE:

Daily Hope A Church of England resource offering hymns, prayers and reflections as well as full services via a freephone number 0800 804 8044.

CONTACT US

Team Rector	The Revd. Dr. C Miller	01235 520144
Team Vicar	The Revd. Paul Smith	01235 534654
Associate Priest	The Revd. Charles Masheder	01235 520959
Church Wardens	Mr Paul Rast-Lindsell	07876 277363
	Mr Andrew Coker	01235 539929
Parish Office	Mrs Jenny Balshaw	01235 520144
Website	https://www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/	
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/stnicolasabingdon	

You can contact the Parish Administrator on administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk leave a message on the office phone [01235 520144](tel:01235520144) or use the office mobile: [07395 943957](tel:07395943957)

***We now have a new [online donations page](#) accessible from the website
Please send any information for next week's pew slip to
eluned@hallas.org.uk by Wednesday***