



St NICOLAS' CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 1 August 2021
Ninth after Trinity
11.15am Mattins
The Revd David Bevington

Dear Friends

'Keeping going...'

We welcome the Revd David Bevington this morning as he leads Mattins and preaches for us on this Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

We know a lot about keeping going given what we have gone through during the pandemic. When I was looking at one of the readings set for today (Ephesians 4.1-16) it was that theme of keeping going which came to mind.

Essentially the passage is about unity and the importance of this as part of the Christian life. But we read: 'maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (v3). There is that specific time in the Christian year between 18 – 25 January – the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – when we pray for the unity of all Christians. St Paul, however, suggests that we should be working on it and 'maintaining it' at all times.

Unity is a gift, and it is gift that is easily damaged, broken or lost. Bad behaviour can find anyway of breaking unity and causing division. So the Ephesians are told to cultivate humility, gentleness, patience and forbearance – neither easy or the most dynamic set of qualities imaginable but necessary if unity is to be maintained.

'Keeping going', 'maintaining things', and not least maintaining unity will never be easy. Our human patterns of behaviour get in the way and we are not people who go around with perfectly fitting halos all the time. (Or at least, not all of us!). Pride, power, control all get in the way.

So perhaps today, and in the week ahead, we might think about that gift of unity which St Paul writes about to the Christians in Ephesus and pray not just for ourselves, but for all Christians, asking for those things which we need to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

With every blessing, *Fr Paul*

READINGS & COLLECT

Exodus 16.2-4; 9-15

Psalm 78:23-39

Ephesians 4.1-16

John 6.24-35

Collect: Almighty God, who didst send thy Holy Spirit to be the life and light of thy Church: open our hearts to the riches of thy grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 8 August

8:00am *At St Helen's this month*

11:15am Holy Communion – The Revd Paul Smith / Beryl Clements

Following the relaxation of Covid regulations on 19 July, there is NO LONGER ANY requirement to register in advance for Services.

We will still be observing some covid mitigation measures during Services.

Congregational singing in the Abingdon Parish:

We are very happy that congregational singing is once more allowed in churches.

Nevertheless, because of ongoing high levels of infection, we request that members of the congregation observe the following precautions while singing, to ensure the safety of everyone:

- You are invited to join in the hymns. Other items will be sung by the choir.
- If you are at least two metres from anyone who does not live in your house, you are welcome to remove your mask while singing. If not, please keep it on.
- Where possible, face in the same direction as the people around you. Do not sing towards anyone else.

We will keep as many doors open as possible to increase ventilation in the church, which is a very large space, so the risks of virus infection are low.

CHURCH NEWS

Research Survey: Listening to Christian religious teaching:

I am inviting people to take part in an on-line survey as part of my PhD research.

Specifically, I am looking for people aged 18+ in the UK who regularly attend church to take part in this study.

The aim of this study is to examine the thoughts and feelings that result from listening to Christian religious teaching using music and the spoken word. If you choose to take part in this survey, you will be asked to listen to a recording and answer questions about what you have heard, together with questions about your own feelings.

This study has received ethics approval from Coventry University, where I am a student. Participation in the survey is voluntary and all responses are anonymous. If you have any questions or would like more information before taking the survey, or would like the survey link emailed to you, please feel free to contact me using my university email: brownj68@uni.coventry.ac.uk.

To take the survey, you can type or copy & paste this link into your web browser:

https://coventry.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5mye8G2StpYssv3

Cards / postcards featuring St Nicolas: we are pleased to announce that we have two styles of cards & postcards featuring St Nic's available for sale at the back of Church. Cards £2, postcards £1. Please put your donation in the wall safe or pay via the 'magic machine'. Thank you

On 3rd August, Philippa Randles will be joining other MU members doing a 5km (6 circuits) sponsored walk / jog, or in her case, wheelchair trundle around Albert Park, for the MU's 'Summer of Hope' initiative. The money raised will help support MU projects in countries around the world. If you would like to sponsor her there will be a sponsorship form in Church. More details from:- Philippa.g.randles1@gmail.com

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Annual Prime Time Summer Event Is taking place at Christ Church, Northcourt Road, Abingdon, 5-8 August. The event is designed for people who are retired. Although it is run at church, it is open to the entire community; people of all faiths or none. The programme is structured around our memory of distant school days. Read more: <https://cca.uk.net/events/2315/joy!/>

Christian Aid events for your diaries

- Tea party in the garden of St Ethelwold's House on Sunday, 22nd August from 2.30pm.
- Fundraising walk on Saturday 4th September along the Two Rivers Walk (Out along the Ock and back beside the Thames) We hope to start from St Helen's Centre at 10 am but this has to be confirmed.

The Young Christian Climate Network Relay (YCCN), from the G7 in Cornwall to COP26 in Glasgow, is raising awareness of the need for climate justice and fair finance. The route from London to Birmingham (9 to 23 August) comprises 7 days of walking to Oxford and 8 to Birmingham, the local stages being Brill to Oxford and Oxford to Kidlington. There is an overnight stay in Oxford on 15 August. Parishes are strongly encouraged to support this courageous project, which is open to all ages but led by young Christians. The YCCN website <https://www.yccn.uk/> lists many opportunities for support by churches and individuals.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

- Steven, Gavin, and Henry our bishops, especially at this time in the life of our diocese;
- Christians in Sport during this time of the Tokyo Olympics;
- Reverence for the earth and environment in light of the ongoing climate change crisis;
- All those anxious about the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions;
- All suffering in body, mind or spirit especially those in our own church community;
- The care homes in our parish, for all residents, families and staff at Bridge House and Old Station House, with whom we have special links;
- All those for whom the summer holidays is a time of stress and worry, rather than rest and relaxation.

WORSHIP

In the parish:

St Nicolas' is now open for private prayer on Mondays 10-12noon.

St Helen's Church is open from 11am to 1pm for private prayer on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

On Wednesday Holy Communion will be in the South aisle of St Helen's at 10.30 am. No need to book.

On Thursday the Said Mass will be celebrated at St Michael's at 12.30pm (and will now take place weekly). No need to book.

Morning Prayer will not be said publicly in St Helen's until September. Precise details will be issued nearer the time.

Church at Home is continuing to offer invitations to attend live-streamed services from churches around the diocese. See

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19-2/livestream/>

[Oxford Cathedral on-line services](#) - Sunday Sung Eucharist and Evensong, and weekday Services (includes service booklets and sermons). Archive available.

The [Parish resources](#) page contains links to Sunday's Service at St Helen's, plus an archive of Parish resources.

The [St Nicolas' website](#) has recordings of our 11:15 am Service sermons.

RESOURCES ACCESSIBLE BY TELEPHONE

Diocesan Eucharist Recordings of most of the Sunday services should be available from around 11 am each Sunday. Simply call 01865 920930 and, once connected, dial 0 for the full service or 1 for a shortened form. Standard call rates apply.

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
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Church Warden Elect	Mrs Eluned Hallas	01235 529462
Parish Office		01235 520144
Website	https://www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/	
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/stnicolasabingdon	

When the office is closed (on Fridays) please contact the Revd Canon Charles Masheder on 01235 520959 for any **urgent pastoral issues**.

The Parish office is open again Mondays to Thursdays, 10am-1pm (or by arrangement). To contact the office leave a message on the office phone 01235 520144, use the office mobile: 07395 943957 or email administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

Please send any information for next week's pew slip to eluned@hallas.org.uk by Wednesday