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**Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Abington**  
**- the Church in the Park -**  
**Welcome to our July Newsletter 2025**

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## **Meet our new Curate: Helen Halson!**

Hi. My name is Helen and I am looking forward to joining you all at Abington as an Assistant Curate following my ordination in Peterborough on 6th July.

I'm 53 years old, married to James and I have a grown-up daughter called Jude. James and I live in Blisworth with our dog Lady. My daughter lives in Northampton with her partner, Paulo, and my Mum is also in Northampton.

My family moved to Blisworth from South Yorkshire when I was just 3 years old, so if you detect an occasional Yorkshire vowel mixed in with my Northampton accent it comes from my parents and my older brother and sister! I have spent most of my life in Blisworth, with short spells in Towcester and Far Cotton, and I came to faith in my early 20's through Blisworth Parish Church. As my faith grew, I started helping with children's activities and whatever was going on at church alongside caring for my family and working. I confess that although I was allowed to do the cleaning and put daffodils in vases, I never progressed to flower arranging!



My working life began in Towcester Post Office where I spent 10 years. Then after a brief time as a driving instructor I started work at Blisworth Surgery, initially as a receptionist, then as a dispenser, accounts assistant and ultimately practice manager of what had become The Parks Medical Practice. The practice had grown to incorporate 4 sites, 90 staff and 23,000 patients, it was a huge job, but I had a great team, supportive GP Partners and we did some amazing things together, particularly through the pandemic.

By 2017, Blisworth Church, now part of Grand Union Benefice had their first female Rector. Although I helped in Church, even leading some services during an interregnum, I had never considered working for the church and I was pretty sketchy on what was actually involved.

The Rectors that I had known were all great and I learned new things about God from each one of them, but they were all men, and I assumed they had some special “holy” quality which was why God had called them. Our Rector Andrea was different, there was certainly something “holy” about her, even I could see that, but she was also very human, a similar age to me, she had a normal family with the usual ups and downs. So, I could relate to Andrea. Even so, when she suggested I go on an “Explore Day” I didn’t do anything about it. By this time my first marriage had broken down and I had my hands full caring for my daughter and earning enough to keep our family home. Andrea, and the whole benefice were wonderfully supportive during this time and when the next Explore Day came around and Andrea asked again, this time I went, expecting that I would get signed up to a children’s work course or similar.

What I hadn’t expected was feeling ridiculously excited as a small group were discussing ordained ministry. I got the impression that anyone was welcome, but I had plenty of objections, “I’m too old” was countered with “we have ordained someone who was 70”. “But I have a job, I have to work” countered with “lots of people with families and jobs get ordained”. Whatever my objection I was assured that God found a way to reach the people He was calling. Suddenly I started to see the possibilities and the way God was already working in me. When I reported back to Andrea she laughed and told me that she had seen a picture of me sitting in church but wearing a clerical collar. I was utterly flabbergasted.



My discernment process was long and complicated, having started it in 2017 here I am in 2025 just starting curacy, but I can see God’s hand in it all the way through, from the challenging times to the wonderful times.

James and I married in 2019, Jude taking the role of father of the bride and walking me up the aisle.

I studied on the Lay Ministry course from 2020 to 2022 and then I was amazed once again when Bishop John informed me that I had completed the discernment process successfully and could begin full time training for ordination in September 2023.

James and I both took a huge leap of faith as I left my NHS career, and we put ourselves and our finances completely into God’s hands. God is good and we have not gone short of anything we needed. Despite my lack of academic confidence, I made it through my college studies, and I was amazed once more when Bishop John invited me to explore the possibility of a curacy here with you all at Abington.

I am excited about the possibilities here at St Peter and St Paul and looking forward to working and learning alongside you all. Your worship, creative projects, and ministry to all ages is inspirational, reaching so many people with God's word and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of your team.

My prayer for us all, from Psalm 25, "Show me your ways O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long."

Helen 😊

\*Helen will be ordained on Sunday 6 July, 11 am at Peterborough Cathedral. Please remember Helen and James in your prayers. Her first Sunday Service at Abington will be Sunday 13 July where she will preach for the first time in Abington.

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## Preachers for this month

**6 July:** Liz Kelly  
**13 July:** Helen Halson  
**20 July:** Jun Kim  
**27 July:** Jenny Parkin

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## Readers and Intercessors for this month

Date	Readers	Intercessor
<b>6 July</b>	Simon and Susie McKay	Alan Sutton
<b>13 July</b>	Junior Church	Junior Church
<b>20 July</b>	Alicia Menzies, Andrew Munns	Alison Barnes
<b>27 July</b>	Jenny Mercer, John Murphy	Prester Coleman

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## Children and Young People

'On Saturday 31st May our Family Fun Afternoon took place at the church. We were delighted to welcome many families who thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality that was provided. The children had fun playing on the bouncy castle and everyone enjoyed holding the animals, courtesy of





Lucia and her sons. Melissa provided lots of delicious refreshments which were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone! Thank you to all those who supported this event in any way. It is a wonderful opportunity to engage with our community and I have received lots of very positive comments from people who joined us for the afternoon. The next Family Fun Afternoon is on Monday 25th August. Please do come and support this event if you are able.

Congratulations to Hank who was baptised on Sunday 22nd June. Hank and his mum, Anita, have been coming to church for about eight months and Hank is a popular member of Junior Church. We are all delighted that he has made the decision to be baptised and pray that God continues to bless and guide him and his family in the coming years.

Little Fishes continues to be popular. Rather than meeting at the Rooms on Monday 23rd June, we met at church and enjoyed a lovely time in the park together. Thank you to Matthew George and Loraine Nixon who have joined our team of helpers. The last Little Fishes before the summer holidays will take place on Monday 21st July, when again we will meet at church. Meeting at church is important for many families as it allows them to



experience, sometimes for the first time, informal worship and fellowship in a sacred space. The children love exploring the building! About eight of the children will be moving on to Primary School in September. Some of these children have been coming to Little Fishes for over two years. We will miss them very much but hope that we can stay in touch with them in the coming years. It has been a privilege to nurture and support these families and we wish them every blessing as they start the next stage in their children's lives.

The numbers of children attending Junior Church always fluctuates in the summer months as families make the most of the good weather to enjoy days out and visit family! However regardless of how many children are at church on a Sunday, we try and make our time together very special and fun! Thank you to all our wonderful JC volunteers who prepare interesting and interactive activities for all the children to enjoy.

Our last Junior Church will take place on Sunday 20th July. We plan to take a break and return on Sunday 24th August.

We are looking forward to our next Abington Youth Church on Sunday 20th July. We are still to plan what we will be doing, but please can the youngsters keep the afternoon free!

During the summer holiday the Community and Outreach Team hope to organise **a lunch for families with young children**. Some of the Little Fishes families will be invited and hopefully some of the families from our primary schools will join us. Many families struggle during the long summer holidays so this is one way in which we can support them. Please pray for this initiative. If you would like to be involved in this event, please do have a word with me. Thank you.

Wishing everyone a very happy and relaxing summer break!

Cathy Tinsley - Children and Youth Missioner - 01604 816680 (this is a new home number) or 07516 979223 and [children@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto:children@abingtonchurch.org.uk)

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## Abington Summer Fete: Saturday 5 July, 2-4pm

Roll up! Roll up! Fun for all at the Summer Fete, **Saturday 5 July, 2-4pm**, in the churchyard. Save the date, and watch our weekly notice slides for more information!

**Raffle tickets** are available from Melissa, Damian or Dianne

**Helpers** - please can you help with the fete? We are looking for volunteers to help either set up on the day, run a stall or clear down after the fete. If you can help, please can you add your name to the volunteer list, which can be found at the back of the church?

**Donations for stalls** - please can you provide donations to the raffle, nearly new or tombola (please, no knives or electrical items). On the day, we will also be seeking donations for the plant stall and cake stall. The donation crates can be found in the porch to place your items in. If your donation is particularly valuable, please hand it to one of the sidespersons for safe keeping.



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## News from St. Christopher's

The English weather being as unpredictable as ever, our Great British Picnic this year took place on one of the few rainy days in June! We were very fortunate though, in that we had a massive marquee for the occasion, and we were able to go ahead and enjoy the time together. Terry Smith was our music master for the afternoon, and the children from Bridgewater Primary School came to sing and play instruments. The food for the picnic was amazing (thank you to the chef and kitchen staff) and everyone had a thoroughly lovely afternoon.



Come rain or shine, on Tuesday afternoons we watch a TV documentary series together. We recently started viewing Blue Planet with David Attenborough. It doesn't matter how old (or young) we are, we never tire of marvelling at the natural world and the miracles of God's creation.

15/20 residents from the St Christopher's

community meet in the lounge, and afterwards over a cup of tea, we discuss the highlights - and sometimes the sad parts - of what we have seen.

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## News from Abington Park View

As Liz was on holiday, Sandra Francis, our second Anna Chaplain, led the service on 11th June and she was ably supported by Jackie and Jane. The theme, 'The love of Jesus in our Community,' was inspired by the 'Under the Oak' bible study led by Bishop Andrew last year. A reading from Matthew's Gospel told us that Jesus said the first commandment is to love God, and the second is to love our neighbour as ourselves. Sandra reminded everyone that APV is part of the church at Abington. We are neighbours, and the residents, their families, and the staff are all prayed for regularly.



The service also included poems, prayers, and the hymns, 'Love divine, all loves excelling'; 'Guide me O thou great Redeemer'; and 'What a friend we have in Jesus.'

A resident, Shirley, recalled the hymn, 'Abide with me,' and read it out to the group, which was very moving.

Eighteen residents, with three carers, were present during the afternoon which ended with everyone reading the words of 'The King of love my shepherd is' as a prayer.



The team visited again on Wednesday 24th June for a Messy Vintage service based on the words of Jesus, "I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture." (John 10.9) The activity was to use coloured pencils, felt tips, and stickers to create the most beautiful scene visible through the gate. Here is the example which was used as a stimulus and there will be pictures of what the residents created in next month's newsletter.

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## Thy Kingdom Come: Pentecost Celebration

It was lovely to celebrate Pentecost together with our sisters and brothers in Christ from other churches in the churchyard! Broadmead Community Church's Worship band led the worship songs and Revd. Peter Hefrom from Christ Church gave a message. It was exciting as we had to get inside the church in the middle of the service as it started raining. And then when the service was over, the sun was shining!



## **Abington Youth Church: Sun 20 July, 5 pm, Bowling Place!**

The upcoming Youth Church will be a social one! We will go for a bowling and food! Please respond to Cathy invitation which will come out soon.

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### **Standing Committee and PCC**

The next Standing Committee meeting will be on Wednesday 2 July, 7.45 pm, Parish Office.

The PCC next meets on Wednesday 16 July, 7.45 pm, Church rooms.

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

Please click the title above to access the link.

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### **Pastoral Support**

We aim to support parishioners through telephone calls, texts, prayer, and pastoral visits. Home Communion is available if you are unable to get to church because of illness. If you, or anyone you know, would like someone 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.

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### **Zoom Compline**

This is a weekly service at 7.00pm on Tuesdays. The joining details are: Meeting I.D. 815 8020 8528. Passcode 409450 Please talk to Liz Kelly if you want to know more about, contact [lizmk@outlook.com](mailto:lizmk@outlook.com) or telephone on 07745 604591.

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### **Parish Newsletter Contribution**

Please send your stories and photos to Revd. Jun, [rector@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto:rector@abingtonchurch.org.uk) by 23<sup>rd</sup> of each month.

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