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

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### **Farewell and Congratulations to Revd. Tracy**

*\*Recently we said our farewell to Revd. Tracy as she concluded her ministry as Curate here in Abington. Tracy will be installed as Priest-in-Charge of St. George's, Wooton on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 7 pm. There are sign-up sheets in the church to arrange a car share. The following is a message from Tracy.*

I would like to thank everyone for making my time in Abington so special. I feel deeply grateful that I have had such a positive experience of curacy and that I have been able to share in your journeys as you follow Jesus and seek to bring the Kingdom of God nearer to all in Abington. There is something very special in this place, a warmth, a welcome, a desire to be a family, that so richly reflects God's purpose for us, and I am glad to have experienced just how loving a church can be.

Following Jesus means that I now leave you. I came as a curate so that I would leave. But leave as a different person to the one who arrived. Not so different that I am utterly changed, but improved – with more skills, knowledge, experience. A little more Christ like

than when I arrived. A little more ordained than when I arrived. A little more mobile than when I arrived (on crutches, with a broken ankle!) A lot more loved. A lot more confident, A lot more equipped to serve Christ and God's people through His Church. A lot more aware of how much more there is to learn.

And so, I head to Wootton to take up the role of Vicar. This is both an exciting and scary step to take, and if I wasn't absolutely convinced that the Spirit will guide me, that Christ's example will lead me, and that God has called me, I simply couldn't do it. But as Elisabeth in the choir said "it's time to find a bigger pot to grow in," and so I go off to face the new challenges and experiences that will help me to grow that little bit more.

I will miss you all very much and will continue to pray for you as you too continue to grow. I am thankful to so many people, but especially to Revd. Jun for his wise leadership and for sharing ministry so generously, and to you all for the very generous gifts, cards, cake and the wonderful send off.

With every blessing,

Tracy



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## Congratulations to Jun

It has been announced that Revd. Jun is invited to join the College of Canons as an Honorary Canon of Peterborough Cathedral by the Bishop of Peterborough. Canon Jun will be installed at Evensong on Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> of November, 5.30 pm, Peterborough Cathedral. You would be most welcome to join the occasion.

Jun says *"I see this as a recognition of the work that we have been doing together as a team here in Abington. It feels natural to me therefore to give thanks to all in the parish, especially our leaders who share leadership and ministry with me, seeking God's will and His Kingdom. Thank you all for your support and prayers."*



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## Preachers for this month

**5 Oct:** Jun Kim

**12 Oct:** Helen Halson

**19 Oct:** Alison Barnes

**26 Oct:** Prester Coleman

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## Readers and Intercessors for this month

Date	Readers	Intercessor
<b>5 Oct</b>	Junior Church	JC
<b>12 Oct</b>	Mark Beasley, Alison Barnes	Alan Sutton
<b>19 Oct</b>	Evgenii Bates, Olga Bates	Alison Barnes
<b>26 Oct</b>	Fiona Crook, Prester Coleman	Matthew George

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## Baby Basics: Your support is making a big difference!

I dropped a car load of baby basics donations off today. This is Gemma with some of the donations. She said they came at just the right time as they had run out of key items like nappies and this was preventing them from completing some packs which needed to be sent out.

Gemma said to all the knitters a big thank you and they are in need of boys or neutral coloured blankets if anyone would like to knit some more. Unfortunately they can't accept lacy knitted blankets due to the risk of babies fingers getting caught. So plain, non lacy designs are best!

There is some free wool and knitting and crocheting equipment if anyone would like to use it to knit up into blankets for Baby Basics. They can be found near the Moses Basket.

Melissa, Chair of Community and Outreach



## Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child 2025

Abington Church is again taking part in this wonderful outreach opportunity. A shoebox filled with toys and useful gifts is an expression of God's love to the child. In fact, it may be the only gift the child receives. Last year 51% of



Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts collected in the UK were delivered to church partners serving in countries where Christians are marginalised and persecuted. This year they are hoping to send even more to these countries. The shoebox outreach events in these countries will now be supported with new translations of a child-friendly bible. This provides an opportunity for the children to encounter Jesus in their own language – and to grow their faith.

### How can you help?

Firstly we need some **shoeboxes**. If you have any, please bring them to church and leave them in the porch. Alternatively you might be someone who likes the challenge of wrapping a shoebox in Christmas paper? If so please do take a shoebox home (there will be Christmas wrapping paper in the porch for you to take) and return it once wrapped. We also need any of the following items please –

**A special item**, such as a cuddly toy, a football and pump, a toy truck, a doll or a musical instrument. Remember they have to fit in a shoebox!

**Small toys**, such as cars, skipping ropes, tennis ball, puzzles, and animal figures are also needed.

**School supplies**, such as pens, crayons, writing pads, solar calculators, and colouring books can all be sent to the children.

Finally, **personal care items**, such as combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, stick deodorants and compact mirrors are also required. Other items such as hats, gloves, sunglasses and socks can also be included in the shoeboxes. Please do not include any toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids.

You may prefer to give some money which will be used to cover the project costs, such as collection and shipping of the shoeboxes.

If you are able to provide any of these items (remember they need to be new or nearly new), please leave them in one of the crates in the church porch by Sunday 26th October.

We are planning to fill the shoeboxes together on Monday 27th October at the Rooms, starting at 10 am.

If you would like to help, please come along and join us. I'm sure there will be an opportunity for coffee and refreshments whilst we work!

For any further information or to make donations, Cathy Tinsley or Alison Canfield, will be pleased to hear from you.

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#### SUPPORTING NORTHAMPTONSHIRE'S BEAUTIFUL CHURCHES



Thank you everyone who supported the Ride and Stride event. A total of £500 was raised which is an excellent result. Thank you to Donald, Chris and Cathy who took part & to John Langley who recorded all those who visited our church.

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#### Church Autumn Clean: Sat 11 Oct, 9.30 am – 12 pm

Abington Church Buildings Committee invite you to join them on Saturday 11th October anytime between 9.30 am and 12 noon for a Church Autumn Clean. If you are able to bring your dusters, cobweb brushes and polish, that would be really helpful! All are welcome. Hopefully it will be a sociable time for us all! Thank you. Dorothy.



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#### Bright Party: Fri 31 Oct, 2.30 pm

On Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October we are organising a **Bright Party** at the church for children and their families. This will be from 2.30 pm to 3.45 pm.

Hopefully we will be outside in the churchyard for some of the time, so please come dressed for the weather! However everyone is encouraged to wear brightly coloured clothes! There will be lots of fun activities and refreshments! All are very welcome. To assist with the planning, please would you let Cathy know if you hope to attend. Thank you.



## Supporting Hope Centre

### Boxes of Hope

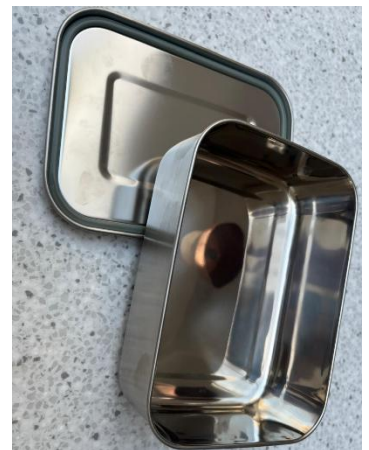
Would you like to make donations to Hope Centre? If so, you are welcome to join Boxes of Hope project by decorating your own cardboard box kit to use as a donation box. You can fill them with loose change and return them into the cardboard collection house that will be located near the font. Please speak to Melissa, our chair of community and outreach for further information.



### Emergency Pack for a Homeless Female

If you would like to support Hope Centre by donating practical item, Emergency Pack might be something you can consider. This is designed to support homeless women with essential items for hygiene, comfort, and safety. It reflects a trauma-informed and person-centred approach. The list of items is displayed on the blue notice board. You can take a metal tin, fill them and bring them back to the collection house near the font.

- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Feminine hygiene products (pads, pantyliners, tampons – individually packed)
- Wipes (unscented, biodegradable preferred)
- Hand sanitiser (non-alcohol-based, travel-size)
- Deodorant (roll-on or stick, unscented)
- Mini shampoo & conditioner
- Soap or body wash bar
- Tissues
- Comb or small hairbrush
- 1x hair ties or headband
- 1x long-life snack (e.g. protein bar, cereal bar)
- 1x pack of nuts, raisins, or trail mix
- Tea bag / instant coffee sachet
- Plasters / small first aid items
- Condoms (respectfully included with explanation if relevant)
- Rape alarm
- Small notepad & pen
- Encouraging message (optional – e.g. “You matter. We’re here.”)





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## News from Abington Park View

Liz, Revd Helen, Jackie and Jane visited Abington Park View on 3rd September for Evening Prayer. We follow the Book of Common Prayer service which gives the residents a chance to join in saying the words of the Confession, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis and the Apostles Creed, which many of them remember from when they were able to attend church in the past. In the New Testament reading from Acts 7.20 – 34a we heard how Moses was chosen by God to lead his people to freedom from slavery in Egypt, just as Jesus came from God to set us free from sin by his death and resurrection.

We enjoyed singing some of our favourite hymns: 'Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us', 'Holy, holy, holy!', 'He who would valiant be', 'Guide me O thou great Redeemer' and 'O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder.'

On Wednesday 17th September, Revd Jun celebrated Holy Communion, accompanied by Liz, Jane and Sandra. Revd Jun spoke about Hildegard of Bingen who died on this day in 1179. She was a remarkable woman - a Benedictine nun, a mystic, a theologian, composer, natural historian - a true polymath, who was a pioneer for women in the church at the time. Twenty residents, a family member, and staff received communion and others received a blessing. At the end of the service, we listened to some of Hildegard's music which is really beautiful and spiritually uplifting.



Thanks as always to Mysha for her help, and to all the staff who make us so welcome each time. Our next service will be messy Vintage on 1<sup>st</sup> October and if anyone else would like to join the team, please contact Liz Kelly.

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## **Date for diaries: Afternoon Tea, 8 Nov, 2-4 pm, Parish Rooms**

Afternoon tea and talk on the people behind the names on the war memorial by Stephen Barnes. A sign up sheet will be available at the beginning of October.

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### **Roots down, Walls down**

#### **Invitation to See, Listen and Grow together**

Dear friends,

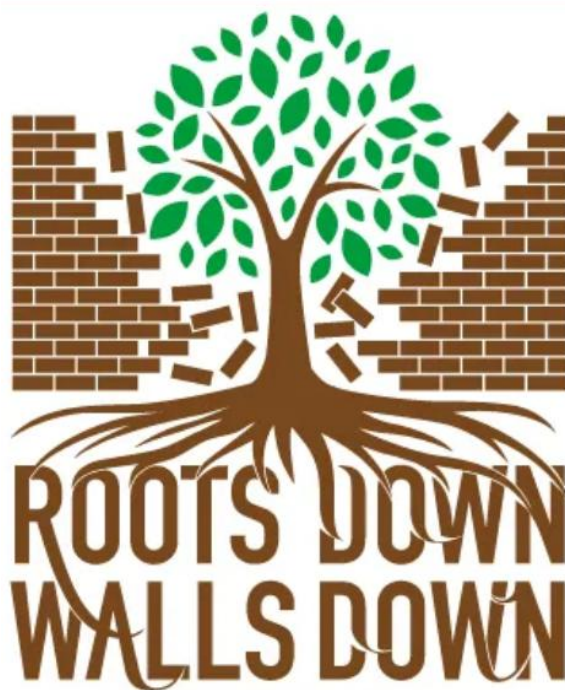
Life is such a gift, and this summer, I've been thrilled – awed, actually - by three magnificent BBC series: David Attenborough two series, 'Oceans' and 'Parenthood'; and Ella Al-Shamahi's series 'Human'. The cinematography has been stunning, as you'd expect. They each, so beautifully, capture the joy, the complexity, the struggles and sheer will to live that is all around us in God's creation. We just need to be shown how to see, it seems.

Ella Al-Shamahi's series made me feel so grateful to God for the beauty and diversity He's created among us as humans: skin tones, culture and languages, gifts and abilities, shapes and sizes, and sexuality. For us as Christians, all this beauty and diversity is a constant blessing – even if we do need to learn how to see it, sometimes.

I am writing now, to invite you to join us on a journey to do just that: to see with fresh eyes, to listen in anticipation that we'll hear something new, and to grow – grow in our understanding and in love and faithfulness, as we appreciate the diversity God has given us as His Church.

To give this journey direction, we have designed a short, four week course based very loosely on a major Church of England study called 'Living in Love and Faith.' Because those of us who came to last summer's 'Under the Oak' series found it such an enriching experience, we've used a similar model for this, too. We are calling it 'Roots down; Walls down' – root ourselves deep in Scripture and Tradition, to draw living water from Christ, the well of life; while pulling down the walls that keep people out or prevent people coming to Him. That, of course, is the essence of being a missional Church

I'm delighted that all the Study Groups have agreed to put their meetings on pause for a few weeks, so they can join us. We would love it if you would join us too, even if you have never been to a study group before, or experienced anything like this.





The course will run over four Wednesday evenings in the Parish Rooms, at 7:30pm and finishing by 9:00pm, on

- October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 'Why this journey now?'
- October 29<sup>th</sup> 'Scripture and Science'
- November 5<sup>th</sup> 'Being the Body of Christ'
- November 12<sup>th</sup> 'How shall we move on?'

I do hope you can join us for this important all-Church conversation.

With my prayers and best wishes, as ever

+Andrew Proud, Chair of Discipleship and Learning Committee

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## **Discipleship Home Groups in Abington**

We believe discipleship is not something that's reserved for only Lent or Advent but something we do and share all the time as we follow Christ day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment.

In Abington, we have several groups that meet regularly to pray together, read the Bible together and journey together in faith. Here are information about what each group is like, what they do together, when and where they meet. Might it be something that you would be interested joining in? If so, please do contact the group leader. They will be more than happy to guide you and assist you.

- **Monday Evening Group**

The Monday Group meets at 20 Church Way on the third Monday of the month. Since Easter we have continued to meet both as continuing fellowship - supporting each other in our journey in faith and taking a topic for each gathering. We have looked at depictions of Christ in art from around the world and shared a meal, talking about an object which has been important to our faith. In September (15<sup>th</sup>) we plan to look at film as an adjunct to our faith.

Please speak with Bob Purser at [purser.bob@btinternet.com](mailto:purser.bob@btinternet.com) or Andrew Proud if you would like to join us.

- **Tuesday Evening Group**

The Tuesday home group has met at a variety of venues for study, prayer and fellowship. We aim to offer mutual support as we live out our faith and face life's challenges. Over the summer the group met monthly (excluding August), looking at some aspects of prayer. From 9th September we will resume meeting weekly. We plan a six-week series, venues TBC, looking at six key Bible characters:

Adam (and Eve), Moses, Elijah, Mary the mother of Jesus, Jesus, the apostle Paul. There is an underlying theme of choosing and obeying. The group is currently fully subscribed. Queries to Prester Coleman (07890515222.)

- Wednesday Evening Group

For many years we have been meeting every Autumn to study a part of the Bible, usually a book from the New or Old Testament, ranging from the letter of James to the Book of Job. We meet in people's homes and for the past two years we have been lucky to have a regular venue at the Pickards' house on 20 Ridgeway, Weston Favell, NN3 3AN. The start time is 7.30pm and we finish by 9pm. Free copies of the relevant study guide are provided. This autumn we are going to study the 'I Am' sayings of Jesus, using the book by Douglas Connelly, 'The I Am Sayings of Jesus Christ'. There are 8 sessions and we shall meet either side of the month when the Rector plans to hold the course on 'Living in Love and Faith'. So our dates are as follows:

September 24<sup>th</sup> / October 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>

November 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> / December 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>

All members of the congregation are very welcome. To enrol please email by Sunday September 14<sup>th</sup> : Jane Evans [n.evans777@btinternet.com](mailto:n.evans777@btinternet.com) (tel. 633431) or inform Dianne Ward or Douglas Rutherford at the 10am service.

- Thursday Daytime Group

An open invitation for anyone wishing to join us.

We meet on the First Thursday every month In Church in the Lady Chapel at 11 a.m. until 12 noon. We open our time together with the same scripture shared in the 10 a.m. service

These are some of the topics we explore, Explore the Holy Spirit. Different styles of praying. What do all those lists of names mean in the Bible, We are going to look at the arts, paintings and poetry and the wealth of Spiritually and History connected to them. Bible readings and Characters in the bible. Listening and reflecting and sharing. A few of our members views,

Jane, To belong and meet together provides a meaningful and loving connection with fellow Christian's who have become my friends, A real blessing.

Chris, I find the meeting very uplifting and it's great to hear from my fellow participants and their point of view from like-minded individuals. During these meetings they have also made my faith stronger and has improved my confidence in talking to people about my beliefs outside of the church environment.

Owen, I'm fascinated how my questions have been clarified. Life is more of an adventure now and so colourful.

Pete, finds it helpful to hear other people's opinions on topics each time we meet, and his own comments help them in their faith.

Cheryl + Steve, have really enjoyed the group, as we are still trying to understand more about the Bible, prayer and faith. We find each meeting enlightening.

Richard, Claire and Judy share with us in our small group meetings.

Our hearts are being enlarged for more of Jesus as fellow travellers together.

Feel free to contact Sandra if you would like to join. [sandrafrancis394@gmail.com](mailto:sandrafrancis394@gmail.com)

- **Bible Study Group at St Christopher's Care Home**

The Bible Study group at St Christopher's meets at 2.00pm on Tuesday afternoons in the large lounge, during the Autumn term and in Lent. Recent topics studied include the Psalms, The 'I am' sayings of Jesus, Church and Kingdom, and The Lord's Prayer.

This time, we will be studying the book of Ruth. The dates are 16, 23, 30 September, 7, 21 and 28 October. The sessions are informal and include reflection, teaching, discussion, and prayer. Everyone is welcome. Please contact Liz Kelly for more information. [lizmk@outlook.com](mailto:lizmk@outlook.com)

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## **Rector's Letter to the Parish on Living in Love and Faith**

Dear Friends

I am writing to explain two important frameworks within the life of the Church of England that you may have heard of before and will hear more about in the months ahead: Living in Love and Faith (LLF) and Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF).

Some of you may remember a statement I made regarding LLF back in February 2024 through Parish Newsletter.

Without going any further, let me explain what LLF and PLF are. Because what I hope to do is to have conversations with you and the church in the coming months ahead about how we may discern together God's call for us to bring people to Christ.

### **What is Living in Love and Faith (LLF)?**

Living in Love and Faith is a process initiated by the Church of England in 2017 to explore questions of sexuality, relationships, and marriage. Over five years, a diverse group of people contributed to the development of LLF resources. These included members of the LLF Coordinating Group, chaired by the Bishop of Coventry, as well as four working groups focusing on the Bible, theology, history, and the social and biological sciences.



The project also involved engagement with the Church of England's sister churches in the Anglican Communion, other churches in England, and representatives from other faith communities. The insights from these conversations are reflected in the Living in Love and Faith book.

In January 2023, as a result of LLF process, the Bishops commended the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF), which allow for the blessing of same-sex couples.

This was discussed at the General Synod (the legislative body of the Church of England like Parliament) in November 2023. After a lengthy debate, Synod passed a motion recognising our desire to be generous as a Church, and to move forward together, whilst recognising that we are not yet of one mind.

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## **What are the Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF)?**

The Prayers of Love and Faith are a resource for praying with and for same-sex couples who love one another and wish to give thanks for and mark their commitment before God. PLF was developed by the House of Bishops and came through as a result of LLF. The prayers express thanksgiving and hope, asking that those dedicating their lives together to God may grow in faith, love, and service, as God's blessing rests upon them.

The House of Bishops commended the use of PLF in regular worship or private prayer from Sunday, 17 December 2023. Pastoral guidance has also been issued, explaining how these prayers can be used.

It's important to be clear: these prayers do not change the Church's doctrine of marriage, which remains that marriage is between one man and one woman. However, the prayers do represent a significant shift in the pastoral practice of the Church, recognising and blessing the love and commitment of same-sex couples in a church context.

The use of PLF is formally at the discretion of the Incumbent of the Parish. However, it is recommended that the PCC and incumbent discern together how they might be used.

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## **Why is this significant to the life of the Church?**

This moment was significant because it marked a turning point in how the Church of England is responding to questions of sexuality, relationships, and inclusion, matters that have long been sources of deep debate, both within the Church and in wider society.

The decision to commend the Prayers of Love and Faith reflects a desire by the bishops to offer pastoral support to same-sex couples within the Church, while maintaining the current doctrine of marriage. It represents an attempt to find a middle way that recognises

the reality of faithful, loving same-sex relationships, while acknowledging the theological diversity that exists within the Church.

The closeness of the Synod vote reflects just how divided the Church is on these matters. It shows that there is no clear consensus, and that faithful Christians, bishops, clergy, and laity alike, hold sincerely differing convictions.

All of this places us in a sensitive and challenging space as a Church, one where we are being asked to live with disagreement, to remain in communion with those who differ from us, and to seek a Christ-like way forward in the midst of uncertainty.

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## **Where do we go from here in Abington?**

In my statement in February 2024, I explained then, why I was reluctant to introduce LLF to the church. I felt that we had more urgent and important tasks ahead as we were about to mark our 800th anniversary. I believed that what God wanted us to focus on at that time was to mark and celebrate what He has been doing for and with us through the last 800 years. Indeed, I am grateful for the many blessings that have come through the faithful responses from the people of God in Abington.

This gave me confidence to think that perhaps we are now in a position to look into LLF and to listen for what God might be telling us as we continue to build His Kingdom. That is why I am writing this letter to you to introduce LLF to you.

My view on LLF and PLF is that I would be willing to conduct PLF for couples who are committed to each other, who are faithfully seeking God's blessing and grace for their relationship. But I do believe this is less about what I am willing or not willing to do as a priest but more about what God wants us, as a church, to do to make his love known to everyone and to welcome everyone to his Kingdom. That's why I would very much like us, you and me, the Church, as the Body of Christ, to shape our future together by discerning God's will together in this.

The PCC has been discussing this matter since May 2025. We have studied the Prayers of Love and Faith and the accompanying pastoral guidance and we have reached the following conclusions:

- a) Although there are different views on sexuality and marriage, we want our church to be welcoming and open to everyone. We want to bring everyone to Christ so that they may experience God's love, grace and blessing through this church.
- b) Therefore, we are willing to explore how we can do that for those who have different sexual orientations and for those who are in same-sex relationships. While we do so, it is important that we remain open and compassionate to those who may hold differing views.

- c) We are willing to explore a possibility to produce a policy which clarifies the prayers we are prepared to offer and the appropriate ways to arrange them in a pastorally sensitive way to all.
- d) As we consider possible policies, we want to include the congregation in the dialogue so that parishioners' views and voices are heard in the process.
- e) To facilitate that, we will offer a course for the whole church beginning on Wednesday 22 October 2025 and running for four weeks. This will be a whole-church exercise, similar to what we did for our 800th anniversary. The course will provide an opportunity not just to explore LLF but also to SEE God's rich and diverse creation with fresh eyes, to LISTEN to one another's stories and to God's word with open hearts, and to GROW together in understanding, love and faithfulness.
- f) After the four-week course, the PCC will draft a policy regarding LLF and PLF. That draft will then be discussed with a view to approving and implementing a final version of the policy at the PCC in spring 2026.

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### **God is calling us to take this journey together.**

I do believe that God is calling us to take this journey so that we may reach a deeper understanding of his amazing grace and love for us. I do believe, pray and hope that we may come together to a deeper understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ in this deeply polarising world.

Please join the whole church exercise on LLF that starts from Wednesday the 22nd of October for 4 weeks. I commend the invitation from Bishop Andrew who leads our Discipleship steering group.

Thank you so much for reading this letter. If you have any thoughts or questions or concerns, please do share them with me. I would love to hear your thoughts but more importantly to pray together with you as we continue to journey together.

With love in Christ

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### **Standing Committee and PCC**

The next Standing Committee meeting will be on Wednesday 19 Nov, Time TBC, Parish Office.

The PCC next meets on Wednesday 3 Dec, 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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