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**Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Abington**  
**- the Church in the Park -**  
**Welcome to our September Newsletter**  
**2024**

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## **Rector's Pastoral Letter**

Some of you may have enjoyed watching the sky of Northampton when Northampton Hot Air Balloon Festival dotted the sky with colourful hot air balloons from dawn to dusk a few weeks ago. My family and I absolutely loved watching them floating away silently and yet delightfully. The boys were absolutely thrilled when they saw some of them waving to us as we waved to them.

In our modern world with social media, smartphones and instant news notifications, sometimes I feel being part of this never-ending race to see whose voice is the loudest or whose news is the fastest. Looking up the sky and watching those hot air balloons made me ask myself: How often do I stop and look up the sky and appreciate it? How often do I stay in silence to appreciate the blessings that God has given to us, his presence and love?

What a great blessing that those hot air balloons brought! I don't know if the organisers thought of any spiritual impact of their work, but I certainly appreciated it in that way and I know I wasn't the only one.

I would like to share the conversation I had with a young man about the event. His name is Liam. He is one of the operators who sits behind the screen on



Sundays' live-streamed services. He is a very talented and reliable operator and a valuable member of the church family. One of his hobbies is hot air balloons. He was actually on one of those hot air balloons that you may have seen.

Liam told me about the similarity between journeys in faith and journeys in hot air balloons.

“Once you are in the balloon, you are completely dependent on the wind. Yes, you can control how high you go up but you have no propulsion other than the wind. So you have got to work together with the wind” said Liam.

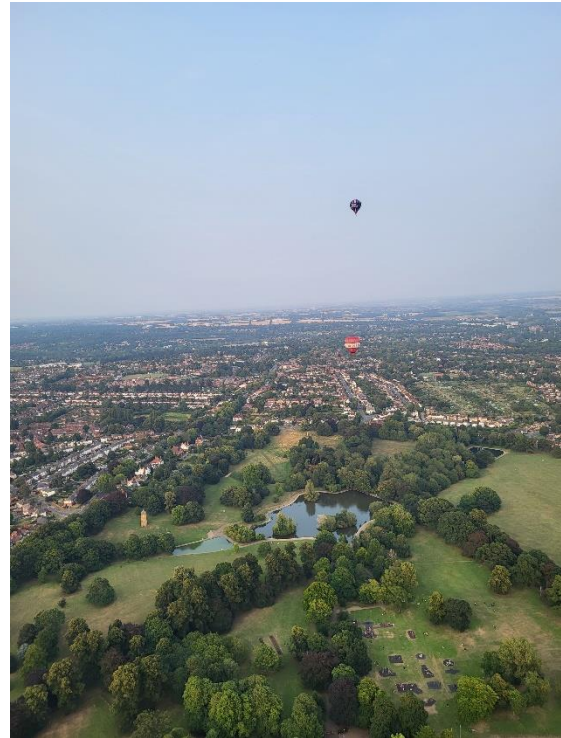
“So how do you land then? How can you safely land the balloon if you don't have total control over its journey?” I asked.

“You should read the wind so you would know when's the right time to go up and when's the right time to go down. Then you can see the right spot opening up for you to land” he answered.

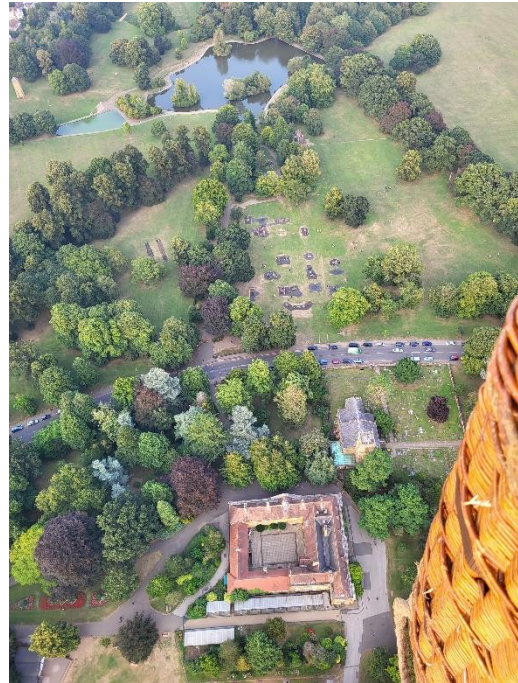
“How true this is for life and for faith as well as for hot air balloons!” I said.

“Yes, there are a lot of similarities. There is definitely something spiritual” smiles Liam as he nods.

I was really impressed and inspired by our conversations. Sometimes we wish we had more control over our journey in life and in faith. However what we need may not be more control or more power but faith to see where God is leading us, knowing that we too are dependent on the wind, the movement and guidance of the Holy Spirit.



After a short break of August, this September is going to be another busy month as it was with June and July. In July we spent 6 weeks discerning where God is calling us to be as we mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In September, we are going to renew our dedication towards God's mission through our Celebration Service. We will discern how we may be part of God's Kingdom through an 8-week sermon series: Kingdom Life. There are many other events such as Songs of 800 years, Family Music Talents Afternoon, Special talks and many more. And we have to remember



that we are dependent on the wind of God. Instead of forcing ourselves flat out, we have to learn to trust and discern faithfully where that wind is taking us and how high or how low we should adjust our altitude to work together with that wind. Then as Liam put it, we will see the right spot opening for us where we can share our stories, testimonies, joys and hopes with others on earth.

Thank you Liam for that wonderful testimony of yours and for these lovely photos.

With love in Christ

Jun

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## **Celebration Service Renewal of Dedication & Confirmation**

**On Sunday the 8<sup>th</sup> of September**, we will celebrate the 800th anniversary of the 1st Rector by renewing our dedication for mission, by confirming those who were baptised, by revealing the new icon and by blessing the ribbons of prayers. Bishop Debbie will preside and preach for us. Please pencil this date and do feel free to invite others.

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## **New Sermon Series: Kingdom Life, “Kingdom begins...”**

We are delighted to announce our New Sermon Series: Kingdom Life.

During Under the Oak, the 6-week long visioning exercise we had in July, we talked and prayed about where God is leading us to be. All of that came down to one thing: How do we build and release the Kingdom of God in our community and our life?

Starting from Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of September to Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, for 8 weeks, we will be exploring questions about the Kingdom: What does the Kingdom mean? What would the Kingdom of God look like in our day to day life? From what and when does the Kingdom of Heaven begin?

Please join us in prayer as we seek the Kingdom of God together. You will be also invited to take part in Home Groups which will also discuss and pray about the Kingdom.

### **Preachers of Sermon Series: Kingdom Life**

15 September: Kingdom is within you, **by Andrew**

22 September: Searching for the one, **by Jun**

29 September: The mustard seed, **by Jenny**

6 October (Harvest/All-Age): When we offer what we have, **by Alison**

13 October: The unseen Kingdom, **by Liz**

20 October: TBC **by Tracy**

27 October: TBC **by Prester**

3 November: the Kingdom amongst us **by Jun**

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### **This month's Preachers**

**1<sup>st</sup> September, Trinity 14:** Revd. Jun

**8<sup>th</sup> September, Celebration Service:** Bishop Debbie

**15<sup>th</sup> September, Kingdom Life 1:** Bishop Andrew

**22<sup>nd</sup> September, Kingdom Life 2:** Rev. Jun

**29<sup>th</sup> September, Kingdom Life 3:** Rev. Jenny

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## Celebrating 800 Years



Logo designed by Katie

- **Songs and Hymns of 800 years (also known as Hymns**  
: **Sunday 1 September, 3 pm**

- **Celebration Service of Renewal of Dedication with Confirmation and Commissioning of new Icon**  
: **Sunday 8 September, 10 am, All-Age Eucharist**

Bishop Debbie Sellin, the Bishop of Peterborough will preside and preach for us. We will unveil the Icon to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary which will be commissioned and installed on the wall next to the font. There will be also confirmation and blessing of ribbons in the churchyard.

- Celebrating Musical Talents with the Mays and Jones  
Sunday 22 September, 3 pm

- Special Talk with Afternoon tea Part 1 (Parish Rooms)

Christians in the Middle East by Open Doors: Saturday 28 Sep, 3 pm

- Sermon Series: Healing and Wholeness from 22 Sep to 27 Oct  
: How God heals individuals and communities through his Church. How can we be an agent of God's healing as the church in the park?

- Special Talks with Afternoon tea Part 2(Parish Rooms)

Christians in Ethiopia by Bishop Andrew: Sat 12 Oct, 3 pm

Christians in Korea by Jun *OR* Talk on the History of Abington: Sat 16 Nov, 3 pm

- **Celebration Concert (Church): Christmas Music from the Messiah  
Sunday, 1 December, 4 pm (Please note the time)**

## Readers and Intercessors for this month

**1<sup>st</sup> September: Readers:** Evengii & Olga Bates

**Intercessor:** Alison Barnes

**8<sup>th</sup> September, 800 Celebration: Readers:** Junior Church

**Intercessor:** Renewal of Dedication

**15<sup>th</sup> September: Readers:** Fiona Crook & Mark Beesley

**Intercessor:** Prester Coleman

**22<sup>nd</sup> September: Readers:** Rhiannon George & Prester Coleman

**Intercessor:** Matthew George

**29<sup>th</sup> September: Readers:** Sue Harrison & Matthew George

**Intercessor:** Rhiannon George

## Butterflies for 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Butterfly Art Display continues to grow and we now have 806! They are beginning to appear around the church so look out for them!

There are still many available at the back of the church to decorate. Many thanks to Susie and Simon who have been busy displaying them.

**Celebrating 800 Years:  
Butterfly Art Display**

We are creating a community art display to celebrate the uniqueness and vibrancy of our church and our community.

Our vision is to cover the front of the balcony with beautiful butterflies, but we need your help to do this. We are inviting everyone to decorate a butterfly to be displayed in church during our anniversary year.

How should you decorate your butterfly? It is entirely up to you! We want this to be a reflection of you and your personality, there are no rules!

Paper butterflies, in various sizes, will be available at the back of the church. Once completed, please return to the box in the Welcomers' Corner.

## Children and Young People Update



**The Family Fun Afternoon was held on Monday 26th August.**

This was a wonderful success! I think we must have welcomed **over 200 people** to the church, including many families with young children. **Lucia's Tiny Farm**, with rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, a tortoise, a bearded dragon, and a chicken, was a great hit with the adults and the children, and the bouncy castles, provided by **Northants Bouncy Castle Hire**, were also very popular.



Many members of the church came along to support and help on this afternoon. Thank you, all of you! Delicious refreshments were prepared and served by Melissa and her family, and Lizzy and one of her friends. Other people were on hand to welcome and chat with our visitors. Lots of people commented how wonderful it was that we were providing such an occasion that was free! We were blessed by fine weather and the park was busy with people visiting the bandstand (Elvis was performing!) and the play area. Attracted by the activities on display in the churchyard, many passing people came to investigate what was happening. This led to lots of lovely conversations and the opportunity to explain that we are celebrating our 800 year anniversary.



**Congratulations go to all of our young people who have recently received their school exam results.**

We wish them well with their future studies and ask God to bless all the children, young people and teachers as they return to school. We also wish seven of the Little Fishes children every success as they start school in September.

*Loving God, thank you for all my friends and my teacher/carers.*

*Thank you that I have a chance to learn new things every day.*

*Please bless everyone at school/nursery, and please bless me too.*

*Help me to know that all day long, whether I'm having fun or whether I'm upset, you are there for me. Amen.*



After a break of three weeks, **Junior Church started again on 18th August.** There is a JC meeting in September when we will be discussing how we might reorganise the group. One idea is to **have a session for the preschool children in the Tower Room**, with the other children meeting in the vestry.

In order to do this **we really need a few more volunteers to help** with this ministry. If you could help supervise a few small children in the Tower Room on an occasional basis, please do have a word with me!

Finally please remember in your prayers those children who will be receiving Holy Communion for the first time on Sunday, 8th September, when Bishop Debbie is visiting us. They are Evgenni, Aloysha, Eric, Katie and Clarissa. We are also delighted that Liam, Louis, Billie, Peter and Paul are among the 17 people who are also being confirmed on this date! I am sure it will be a wonderful occasion.

Cathy Tinsley Children and Youth Missioner, 07516979223 and [children@abingtonchurch.org.uk](mailto:children@abingtonchurch.org.uk)

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# The logo for 'Ride and Strides' features the word 'RIDE' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter 'I' is replaced by a black silhouette of a bicycle gear. To the left of 'RIDE' is a small black silhouette of a church spire. To the right of 'RIDE' is a large black plus sign, followed by the word 'STRIDES' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

## **Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust**

### **Ride and Stride 2024 Saturday 14th September 10am - 6pm**

The Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was founded in 1955 with the object of raising funds to make grants to churches in the county of all denominations for their “preservation, repair and maintenance, improvement, upkeep, beautification and reconstruction.”



The annual Ride and Stride event is the main fundraiser for this charity, and in 2023 raised over £44,400. Thank you to all who helped.

For those who don't know about this event, people are sponsored to ride or walk to as many of the participating churches as they wish. We have some very generous sponsors here at church, so don't worry if you don't like the idea of asking people for sponsorship! We can do this!! However it would be lovely if we had a few people who undertook the challenge of riding or walking on the day. John Langley has for many years acted as 'recorder', welcoming people to Abington church, as they participate in the event. So, if you would like to take part, or would be willing to help John for an hour on this day, please would you speak to Cathy Tinsley (07516 979223), who will be happy to provide you with more information.

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## News from St Christopher's

August has been a very busy month at St Christopher's, and we have been trying to make the most of the good weather. We started off with a boat trip along the river on the 'Community Spirit'. Residents and staff enjoyed a packed lunch, and it was a lovely day all round.



We held our annual Summer Fete on the 17<sup>th</sup> August and couldn't have picked a better day if we had tried. It was lovely sunshine with a light breeze, and it made the fete a day to remember! St Christopher's

Choir sang, and it was a very traditional fete day.

Last week we had a 'silly afternoon' with the help of a dressing up box and a Photo Booth. Fortunately for everyone involved, the costumes and wigs made everyone unrecognisable!



## Abington Pastoral Team

Over the summer months, the residents have enjoyed taking part in services of Evening Prayer, Holy Communion, Songs of Praise and Messy Vintage.

We have talked about St Thomas, family holidays, and Jonah, who tried to run away from God. This theme provided us with a theme for our Messy Vintage session on 15 August during which we created a seascape on a paper plate.

Here are some photos of work in progress and the finished articles.

Tracy and Liz attended the Summer Fête, which was held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August. It was a lovely occasion, and it was good to meet many of the residents' families who were there supporting the occasion too. The Human Fruit Machine was great fun!

To find more about ways to support our elderly and local care homes, 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.



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## Adventures of a Curate

One of the gifts of curacy is being able to experience ministry in different settings. Some time ago, I covered Sunday services at Holy Sepulchre and St Michael's, and both were great opportunities to preside in a different setting. I have recently covered a service at St John the Baptist in Kingsthorpe and conducted a wedding at St Andrew's, Old.

On every occasion I have arrived and been greeted by a helpful Churchwarden who has been eager to make sure I have what I need. When I ask how the service usually runs, the answer has always been along the lines of “we just do it the normal way,” and so I have been learning just how varied ‘normal’ can be!

These opportunities have not only been a chance to worship in different places, with different people, but have caused me to reflect on my own practices when leading; helping me to identify the elements of leading worship that feel natural, and those that require a bit more energy. In all, they have been rich and helpful experiences.

I also had the opportunity for an experience of a very different kind as I headed off to do a three day placement at the Chapel Gym in Corby. The gym has a remarkable story, beginning with a disused church in the centre of Corby which was reimagined thanks to the input of Revd. Paul Frost (Parish Priest at St John’s, Corby) and Chris – a man with a rather colourful past who turned his life around after coming to faith following a spell in prison. Chris had connections with the Corby gym scene and together with Paul they transformed the old church into a new, well equipped, affordable gym.



I was eager to see the kind of faith encounters that could happen in such a place and what I found was a safe and welcoming space with a great sense of community that offered support, friendship and spiritual encouragement – whether it was a young, isolated and anxiety filled young person, or the Women’s Institute come to improve their physical resilience. A good deal of time was spent sitting behind the reception desk drinking tea and chatting to the team, but when I wasn’t doing that, I got stuck in to help with a bit of painting that needed doing! This was a good vantage point from which to see the diversity of people using the gym and get a real sense of the connections that were being built between them.

The Chapel Gym offers free three month membership to prison leavers, reduced rates to those on benefits, and works hard to overcome the obstacles that stop people being a part of their community. They are currently working towards providing accommodation for those in need through the purchase of a

house which can be used by a local charity to help people restart their lives. I sometimes wonder what church looks like outside the walls of our church buildings, and although the gym is in a church building it is most definitely identified as a gym. But there is a real ministry here; no robes, or hymns, or Eucharist, but compassion, encouragement and a welcome for all. I left feeling that I had experienced church in the community in a unique way and whilst it might not be a setting I come across again, I am glad I was able to be there.

I had hoped to tell you about another very different placement at Peterborough Cathedral, but Covid had other plans! My placement has been rearranged for the end of August, so perhaps I can tell you about that in next month's newsletter!

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### **Monthly Bible & Prayer Group**

We share our questions about the Bible and faith. We share our hopes and dreams in prayer. Why not join our monthly Bible and Prayer group? Anyone with any questions is welcome.

We are currently meeting every **first Thursday** of the month at the **Rectory**. Next meeting is **Thu 5 September at 7.30 pm** at Rectory. Do speak to Jun if you are interested.

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### **Prayer Requests**

Each week at church we pray for people in need and also for schools, colleges and universities attended by our young people, as well as places of employment, where members of the church family work.

If you would like to make a prayer request, please see Cathy Tinsley, who is responsible for compiling these requests, or email her on [cathytinsley18@gmail.com](mailto:cathytinsley18@gmail.com)

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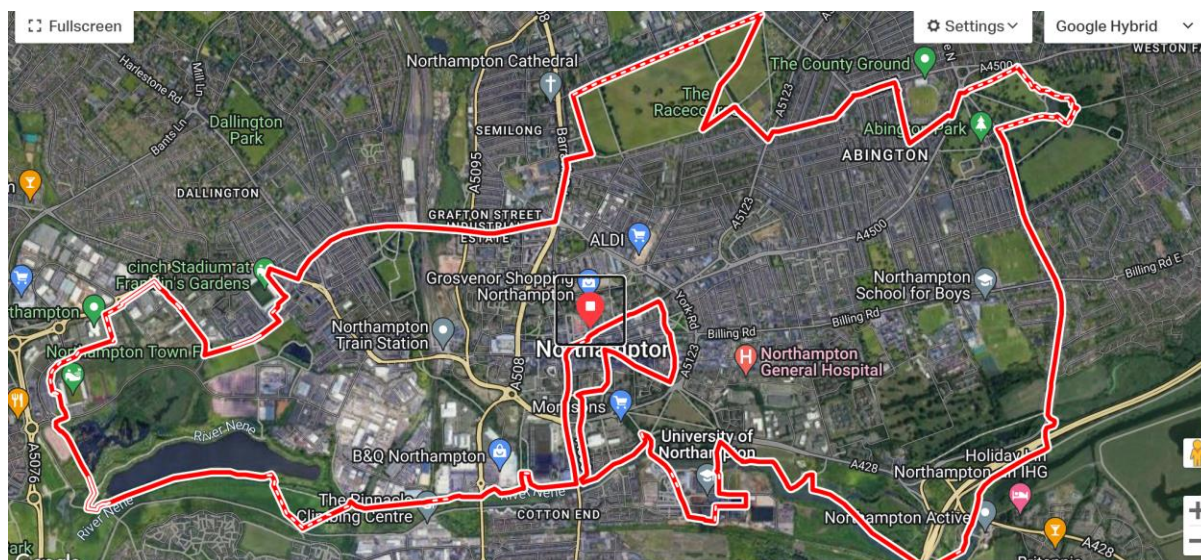
### **[Draft Minutes from the last PCC Meeting](#)**

Please click the title above to access the link.

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## Road Closures: Sunday 15th of Sep, 8.30 am-11.30 am

Please note that there will be road closures as displayed below on Park Avenue South and Billing Road with the exception of Rushmere Road which will allow inbound traffic on to make it easier to come to church. You can then then turn left on to Billing Road and can park near the church.



Inbound traffic on Rushmere road is allowed.

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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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## 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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