



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Sunday 26th April, 2026

St Mark the Evangelist

ST MARK

Most of what the Church tells about the saints falls somewhere in between the non-fiction and fiction ends of a sliding scale between those two poles. For instance, the Golden Legend of the saints tells us that St Mark the Evangelist came from a priestly family, and when he adopted faith in Christ, he became St Peter's godson, and travelled with Peter to Rome (where he allegedly transcribed Peter's preaching and compiled it into the book we now know as the Gospel According to Mark), and to Aquileia and to Alexandria. He was martyred in Alexandria when a mob dragged him through the city, bruised and bleeding. His persecutors wanted to burn his remains, but he was saved by a miraculous hailstorm; while the Alexandrian pagans took shelter, Mark's Christian sisters and brothers interred him in their church. Over the years, numerous posthumous miracles were attributed to his intercession, from curing a young man's cancer to saving a labourer who fell from the steeple of a cathedral dedicated to St Mark. Ultimately, his relics were taken, *stolen* (for safekeeping, according to Venice) from Alexandria to Venice. That city adopted Mark's emblem, the lion, for its civic sign.

Why a lion? Well, post-apostolic traditions associate the four evangelists with the four beasts described in Ezekiel 1:10 and Revelation 4:10, so Mark had to be one of these four options. Readers reckoned that his gospel begins with John the Baptist *crying out* in the wilderness, and 'crying out' could be described as 'roaring'.

How close is all this to fiction, and how close to non-fiction? Some details in Mark's Gospel suggest that it may have been written in Rome, but it seems unlikely to have been written by someone with Jewish roots; and we don't even know that it was written by somebody named Mark. The gospel doesn't bear any signs of close proximity to St Peter, either. These stories resemble *family traditions* or *midrash* or internet *fan fiction* more than austere historical narrative — but they add colour and adventure to the few, sparse, inconclusive facts we can be sure of. Mark's Gospel, like the lion, roars with good news that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many. Alleluia!

The Revd Dr A.K.A. Adam

WELCOME to St Helen's this Sunday. 8.00am *Holy Communion (1662)*; 10.30am *Sung Eucharist*; 5.30 pm *Service of Healing and Wholeness*

The 10.30 am service at St Helen's today can be accessed on Zoom from 10.15 am on: Meeting ID: 865 5159 6523; Passcode: 626891.

FOR TODAY'S SERVICE

Readings Acts 15.35-41; Psalm 119.9-16; Ephesians 4.7-16; Mark 13.5-13

Service Setting: Tambling, Holy Trinity Service

Hymns:

Processional: 492 Jesus, where'er thy people meet

Gradual: 469 I heard the voice of Jesus say

Offertory: 589 The King of love my shepherd is

Anthem: Brother James' Air arr. Jacob

Post communion: 138 At the Lamb's high feast we sing

Collect: Almighty God, who enlightened your holy Church through the inspired witness of your evangelist St Mark; grant that we, being firmly grounded in the truth of the gospel, may be faithful to its teaching both in word and deed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Psalm: 23 Response: The Lord is my shepherd there is nothing I shall want

The Lord is my Shepherd

therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures

and leads me besides still waters. **Response**

He shall refresh my soul

And guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;

For you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. **Response**

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me

You have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. **Response**

5.30 pm Service for Healing and Wholeness

Hymns all from Sing Praise

173 Be Still for the presence of the Lord

141 We give God thanks for those who knew the touch of
Jesus' healing love

81 Word that formed Creation

THE COMING WEEK AT ST HELEN'S

ON WEEKDAYS	9.10 am <i>Morning Prayer</i>
ON MONDAY	9:30 - 11am <i>Babies & Toddlers</i> in the Centre Hall. 1.45 - 3.30pm <i>Volunteer Group Meeting</i> in the Centre Lounge
ON TUESDAY	5:00 – 8.30pm <i>Yellow Submarine Group</i> in the Centre Hall 6:00 – 8.30pm <i>Baptism preparation</i> in the Centre Lounge 7:30 – 9:00pm <i>Ringin' Practice</i>
ON WEDNESDAY	10.30am <i>Holy Communion</i> 5.15 - 6.15pm <i>Beavers</i> 6.30-8pm <i>Cubs</i> in the Centre Hall
ON THURSDAY	6.15 - 8.00pm <i>Life Drawing Class</i> in the Centre Hall 7:00 <i>Eucharist</i> followed by <i>Annual Parochial Church Meeting</i> in church
ON FRIDAY	4.00pm <i>Abingdon School Bell Club</i> & 5.00pm <i>Young Ringers Practice</i> in the church. 5.30pm <i>Choir Practice</i> in the church.
ON SATURDAY	10:00 – 12 noon <i>Art class</i> in the centre hall
ON SUNDAY	10.30am <i>Sung Eucharist</i>

PROGRAMMES, EVENTS & NOTICES

The **Annual Meeting of Parishioners** and **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** will take place on the evening of **Thursday 30 April**. The evening will start with a short Parish Communion at 7 pm, followed by refreshments. The Annual Meeting of Parishioners (to elect Church Wardens) will be at 7.45pm. The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will follow. All papers are now available online – at https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_communications.html - and some hard copies will be made available in church.

The April edition of the Parish magazine, 'A Candle in the Window' is available from Easter Day. Download from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php
Do read, discuss and even enjoy!

Silent Reflections will be held on **Tuesday 28 April** at 7.30-8.30 pm at St Michael and All Angels. Rosalind Rutherford will provide material for our reflections on the theme: *Heaven in Ordinary*. We meet initially in the church room. Parking permits are available for Park Road.

Moving into Stillness: circle dancing to Taizé chants with silent interludes at St Michael and All Angels on **Thursday 7 May** in the church from 9.45 – 10.45 am before the regular circle dancing session at 11 am. Elizabeth Mitchell will be the teacher. No prior experience/partner needed. Tea and coffee will be provided between the two sessions. Parking permits are available for use in Park Road.

Canoeists We are again hosting a group of canoeists travelling from Witney to Westminster on **Saturday 9th May**. We provide an evening meal and breakfast, so if you feel able to support this charitable undertaking with a donation of food or beverage, please speak to me. Linda Hobbs

A concert on Saturday 9 May at 6 pm at St Michael's Church, Park Road, by Wantage Academy Brass, CARITAS Children's Choir and Wantage Youth Brass. Our annual fund-raising concert for The Abingdon Bridge, TARIRO – Hope for Youth in Zimbabwe and the church. Tickets are available on-line, <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FYLI>, and at the door (credit

card payments accepted). Adults price £12, concessions £10, 16 & under free. Do please support this key event in our programme and bring family and friends.

Christian Aid Week, 10th-16th May: Please support our market stall on **Saturday 9th May**. We need plants, books, DVDs, CDs, vinyl records, cakes, preserves, etc. Please call Rob King on 07825 772742 if you have books etc to donate (or email rking.home@ntlworld.com) and he will pick them up. For cakes the allergen information needs to list all ingredients: e.g. flour (GLUTEN) butter (MILK), EGGS ..., with the allergens in CAPITALS. Please bring plants and home produce to the Market Place between 8.30 and 10am on the Saturday, or deliver them on Friday 8th to me at 43 Radley Road, OX14 3PL. There will be buckets in church but financial donations can also be given directly to our Abingdon [fundraising page](#). Thank you. Mary Anderson, 07956 813524

Open Church Stewarding. If you have been thinking this is something you could do to support the outreach of St Helen's church family please talk to me, Elizabeth Simpson, after the service, or email me on simpsonem123@gmail.com. With thanks.

For prayer

- For the city of Venice and Alexandria, and for their cathedrals, and for all churches and other institutions under the patronage of St Mark;
- For barristers, solicitors, paralegals, and all who work at the law;
- For translators and interpreters;
- For all who proclaim the gospel, especially those who endure hardship for their witness

Please pray for the residents of Turnagain Lane, Turner Road, Victoria Road, Vineyard. Intercessory prayer requests to clairembolton@googlemail.com.

For health, consolation & wellbeing: Sarah Stevens, Katie Stuart, Alli, David, Anne Smithson, Loelia Lyon, Vanessa Madden, Louise Siddle, Annelise Dennis.

Next week's readings – Feast of Ss Philip & James: Ephesians 1.3-10, John 4.1-14

Team Rector	The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown rector@abingdonparish.org.uk
Team Vicar	Vacant
Associate Priest	The Revd Dr A. K. M. Adam (AKMA) akma@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk
Wardens	Ms Margaret Horton and Mr David Pope
Director of Music	Dr Peter Foster
Assistant Organist	Mr Andrew Shouler
Parish Administrator Vacant	
Caretaker	Mr Robin Day
Parish Safeguarding	Mrs Pat Hudson safeguarding@abingdonparish.org.uk
St Helen's Safeguarding	Mr Emmanuel Chukwuma

The **Parish Office** is open Monday – Thursday, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm (closed on Fridays).

Phone: 01235 520144. Checked on Fridays, morning and afternoon.

E-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk; Website abingdonparish.org.uk/StH

A copy of this Newsletter is posted regularly on our website.