



## **Background**

Abington Church is lovingly known as “the Church in the Park” in the community. Over the last couple of years, we have been discovering more about what it means to be “the church in the park” and how we are called to serve the community, particularly children and families, with that identity.

The pandemic was a real challenge but also a great opportunity for us to discover our potential in reaching out to the wider community. Through our creative initiatives involving the churchyard and art, we were able to engage with hundreds of families. We proactively developed our digital church project which also gave us opportunities to make our worship more interactive and intergenerational, engaging more with young people in the life of the church. We delivered occasional craft packs and gifts packs to children and families which were very much appreciated. And many more.

Of course, we are not perfect and there are many challenges. We need to develop provisions and ways to engage with our teenagers. We need to find ways to turn those community projects through our churchyard and outreach work into the channel to share the gospel with families. We believe there is more work to do to give our Junior Church and Toddler's group clearer vision and a sense of community.

Just before the pandemic began, we had a review process on our work with children and young people and as a result we now have a newly created post which is much larger than the previous post and a fresh children and youth committee with members who are enthusiastic and willing to work to share the gospel with children, young people and families. And we would love you to join us and work together with us as we continue to follow God's calling in this precious work for his Kingdom.

## *Our Vision*

Abington is a thriving Church loved by its community, which it has served for over 900 years. It sits at the centre of beautiful Abington Park, drawing people from all generations into a relationship with God.

Abington is a church with flexibility and broad spectrum. We appreciate diverse traditions of the church from a very informal contemporary service to more a traditional liturgical setting. Before the pandemic, Sundays were mainly more traditional Eucharist Service with occasional informal services for families. But since the first lockdown, this has changed significantly and we embraced more flexible, informal approaches to Sunday services as well as adopting using technology. It is our hope that we don't lose this when we are back to the new normal. And it is our hope that we continue to encourage those diverse traditions in the life of worship to carry out our mission.

Abington's vision is to become a truly intergenerational church where people of all ages come to know Christ. We are passionate about reaching out to children and young people and their families, not just those who live within the parish, but also those who visit the park. We are also excited about further developing our ability to embrace technology to make our mission and worship more accessible and engaging.

We believe that to be able to carry out our mission and live out our calling as disciples, first we ourselves need to be rooted in a loving relationship with Jesus. This should be our priority in our mission towards young people and families. Bringing them to meet Christ in all we do.

We believe that as 'the Church in the Park', we have a special calling to reach out and welcome those from wider areas of Northampton and ultimately aspire to extend our Children and Youth Ministry wider throughout the Deanery.

We would like to work together with the appointee to start with doing a small number of essential things really well. This will involve focusing on, first of all, making our Junior Church on Sundays really an exciting and significant part of the church. We also expect the appointee to lead and further develop our weekday Tots and Teddies group with fresh approach to make it more missional. We hope to look at further developing our mission initiatives such as the Umbrella Church (A monthly informal service focusing on toddler and young children which used to take place on Sunday at 3 pm in the church building.), Seasonal Art Projects by using the churchyard with a local artist, Experience Series which involves local schools.

We are mindful that we haven't been able to take better care of our teenagers and engage them in the life of the church in a meaningful way. This will need a new vision and drive from the appointee, starting from building trust and relationship with our teenagers.

Finally, we have really enjoyed and appreciated the new and fresh experiments we did with our online worship and digital church. It has been excellent especially in involving and reaching out to children, young people and their families. We would like to continue to develop that with the appointee on how to use the technology effectively on our mission. We have already put a faculty process in place to bring changes to our building for that.

We are more than willing to take bold approaches and to try new experiments, trusting in God and his promises to build his Kingdom. We would love you to join our journey!





**Seasonal Churchyard Art Project**  
(Easter, Summer, Remembrance, Christmas) with activities for children, young people and families.



**Monthly Sunday Toddler's Church (The Umbrella Church)**



**Weekday Toddler's group**



**Children's craft packs and gift packs being delivered to local families during the pandemic during the lockdown**



**All Hallows Eve activities for families during the pandemic**



**Engaging with a wider community and families through Nativity Trail**

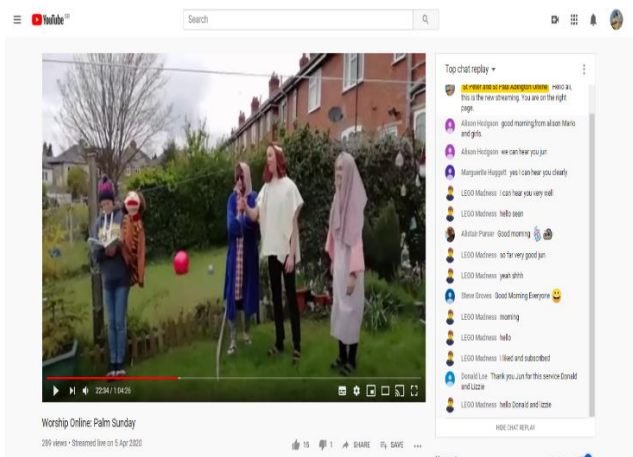




Outdoor worship



Work with community groups such as local uniformed organisation



Creative Bible Drama produced by young people and families of Abington



Online Christingle Service

To find more about us, you can see our Youtube channel and Facebook page as well as our website. You can also see us in action during the lockdown in the following links.

- [Christingle](#), [Remembrance](#), [Harvest](#), [Easter](#)



Thank you for taking interest in this post.

We would love to meet you!