

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"



Dear Friends,

In today's turbulent world we can really identify with the sentence that Charles Dickens uses to begin his great novel 'A Tale of Two Cities'.

It continues: *"it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way"*.

This sentence seems to sum up our situation today and if we have time to read the novel (it was written for a reader who may well have more time for reading than we do) it's theme is resurrection.

Today we find ourselves in a world of "Light" that has so much beauty and potential, the wisdom of science and education and the hope that we can change our destructive lifestyles. Yet we also know that there is so much "Darkness": injustice, poverty, and cruelty in the world. "Foolishness" as economists tell us that the financial recession, caused by the reckless pursuit of huge profits and gain, is going to take a long time to improve. "Despair" as our lives rarely attain all that they could. And finally "incredulity" as our love of God - and perhaps our seeking of him - is not exactly wholehearted!

The message of Easter is that the worst of times, the darkness, despair, even the "other way" – hell - is overturned by the good news of resurrection in Jesus Christ. He has given us the promise of life, in all its fullness. We are offered this newness of life by God, but do

we accept it? When we are given a gift we do have to accept it! When we are offered forgiveness we have to trust God in order to be forgiven. And then we need to live our lives in the light of this gift otherwise we may as well not have the gift at all!

The Good News of Easter is that God's love has been revealed to us in Jesus, who was prepared to lay down his life for us, his friends. Jesus is raised by God, showing that his love can never die, and we can share his resurrection life. It must have felt like the worst of times to Jesus' disciples and friends, with a sense of despair and disbelief as they saw him die such a terrible death.

The new light of Easter morning brought them a fresh hope, and as we celebrate the day when death was overcome and the hope of heaven given to us all, we can surely say that – whatever the latest news in the papers – the resurrection experience of new life in Jesus was, and ever will be, the best of times for all who trust in him.

A happy and hope-filled Easter to everyone.

Jo

Pastoral Visiting Team

Jo is keen to set up a Pastoral visiting team to go out into the Parish to visit those who are unable to get out for any reason and who may appreciate a chat and a cup of tea or who may wish to receive communion at home.

I have agreed to be the co-ordinator of the team, but before we can arrange training we need to know who would feel able to

give up a few hours each month to be part of the team.

We also need to be sure that we know all the names of people who would appreciate a regular visit.

If you think that you might be prepared to become part of this team please contact me and we can arrange a meeting to discuss the way forward.

It is very important that even those who can no longer get to Church regularly are still able to feel that they are part of the family of All Saints and with your help we can make sure that nobody is denied contact with the Church they love.

Janet Bird 01992 587544

Easter Holy Communion

Would you like to receive communion at home this Easter or do you know anyone who is housebound who may like to receive communion during Holy Week?

Please let Jo (584899) or Janet (587544) know as we are compiling a list of people to visit and take communion to.

Christmas Tree Festival

We were delighted to be able to present a cheque for £3791.70 last month to Isabel Hospice as their share of the proceeds from the very successful Christmas Tree Festival.



Isabel Hospice is a registered charity which provides free care and support for patients and their families living with cancer and other life-limiting illnesses throughout eastern Hertfordshire. We need to raise £3.9 million in 2008/2009.

When funds permit, we plan to expand our current services, outlined below, to patients with renal, circulatory, neurological and respiratory diseases.

The Hospice provides a 16 bed In-Patient Hospice in Welwyn Garden City, a Day Hospice catering for up to 60 patients each week plus 3 satellite day hospices, a Home Care Team providing support and nursing care in patients' homes, and a Family Support and Bereavement Service.

A fully trained team of volunteers supports our specialist medical and clinical teams, ensuring that patients and their families receive the best possible care and support.

In addition, Isabel Hospice's team of Community Nurse Specialists, who work closely with all local GPs, is available from the outset to give advice and support to patients and their families and to refer them to appropriate parts of the Hospice as necessary.

For more information contact us on 01707 382500 or look on our website www.isabelhospice.org.uk

