

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



Growing in the light

Dear Friends,

Recently we have been having a bit of trouble with the lights in our church. Somehow every time we switched a light on a whole set of lights would fuse. We joked about how it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep the lights on. One of the main causes was the light at the back of church, somehow the switch would trigger the rest of the lights to fail. In the end after some examination and thought, the electrician went back to the power source and put a sensor on the light so that we no longer need to use the switch and the system was made a whole lot safer and effective.

As you know, we have also been thinking about how to 'keep the lights on' at All Saints in the sense of keeping the fabric, the costs and our ministry going. Just as the electrician had to do quite a lot of hard thinking and come up with a solution, we are also doing a lot of hard thinking, praying and looking at different solutions to keeping our church going. Financially we need to raise an extra £20,000 a year to cover costs and encourage more people to be involved in our ongoing witness in our community.

My view as a priest and spiritual leader is that our future must be grounded securely in our beliefs and our embracing of Christ's mission. Despite (or because of?) the harsh realities of financial necessity, we need to build on a ministry of reaching out, caring, sharing and loving. Otherwise we run the risk of building on increasingly shaky foundations, rather than on solid rock. Just as the electrician went back to the source, we need to go back to our Source, our

heavenly Father. Simply but profoundly put: through Jesus we can see God's love revealed and through his Holy Spirit we have the gifts to live this love out in our lives. Jesus commanded us to love God and love our neighbour as ourselves.

Our vision and therefore our solution to not only 'keeping the lights on' but growing in The Light is to put that love into action. It must begin – and end! - with prayer and worship. Through it we root ourselves in the love of God and are sent out into the world to share this love. This fits with our Diocese's vision of "Living God's Love". My hope is that together we can ensure that everyone of all ages and in all their glorious God-given diversity feels attracted to be an essential part of the body of Christ from the first time they step into our church.

My vision is that our worship of God and our togetherness in care and outreach needs to be the best gift that we can offer. There are often people visiting our Church, whether it is for one of our services, visit, pray or to seek peace and each one of us has a role in welcoming that person or family and in developing faithful relationships where appropriate. Many of us have had the privilege of coming to love God from a very early age and research has shown that helping children and families feel at home can give this gift to others so that they feel cared for and know that they are loved.

Jesus shows us how we can serve sacrificially and just as the electrician needed to do his research, we need to find out how we can best serve others. And the electrician was also open to finding new ways of dealing with the problem, rather than replacing like for like. The church is

working on Fresh Expressions to engage with people in different ways. We have so many contacts and relationships with the community, now we need to find out what they need. Are we serving in ways that are helping us to grow or are we running around just being busy, too busy to see what God is calling us to do?

You may remember that ghastly newspaper headline; 'will the last person to leave please switch off the lights!' Our response must be that we are going to grow, grow in the Light of Christ. As someone said when asked what they would like to hear people saying about the church in five years' time: "I remember a time when you used to be able to find a seat"!

Love, Jo

Holy Communion at 8.00 am

During July and August our 8.00 am congregation will be worshipping at St Andrew's Church, within the Team Ministry.

From September, we will meet every week at 8.00 am at All Saints. It is a lovely contemplative service from the Book of Common Prayer in traditional language, with a reflection, and lasts about 40 minutes.

We hope to grow our numbers at this service and we will be inviting those who want to remember loved ones at their year's mind when we include their names in the prayers.

Messy Church



Our next Messy Church will be on July 14th 4.00-5.30 pm in the Hall.

Then we will meet again on September 15th at 4.00 – 5.30pm also in the Hall with the theme 'Harvest'.

We will be looking at whether we hold the next sessions in church after this:

October 20th Celebrating the Saints
November 17th Preparing for Advent

Children in Church at the 10.00 Service

The Family service will continue to be an intergenerational service, but as we realise that some of our formal Eucharistic services can be more difficult for children to feel at home in we will have children's activities in the meeting room at those services, enabling children and families to feel welcomed.

Would you like to join this team of story tellers and help with the activities? Nerine Chalmers is drawing up a rota of people, but please let me (Jo) know so that I can pass your name to her. We envisage two people leading this and that we would need you to assist once in every two months.

A lasting legacy

It's a great thing to make a will, however young or old you are, as this is your legacy.

Once you have made sure that you have provided for your loved ones, you could make a lasting gift to God, by leaving a legacy to His church. A gift in your Will to All Saints Church is one of the most valuable and lasting ways you can continue to support its mission and ministry within our community.

A gift can be an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and will help keep our church alive, and help transform its future. All your gifts, including gifts in wills to the Church are exempt of inheritance tax.

If you feel that you would like to leave this lasting legacy, you can update your will or just add a codicil to make amendments to an existing will. The name of the church account is: All Saints Hertford Parochial Church Council.