NEWSLETTER OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH • HERTFORD

All Saints' Welcomes Everyone

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### Who is Jesus and what does His Way mean for us?

A sermon preached on May 11th 2025 before our Annual Meetings (Readings: Acts 9.36-end and John 10.22-30)

Some people have very distinctive voices. When you hear certain people on the radio you know immediately who they are even though you can't see them. The voices of our closest family and friends can stop us in our tracks. When my children were young, I could pick out their cries immediately, even at a distance. Jesus said - my sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me. He suggests that people will know who he is if they listen.

We are told that this conversation takes place in Solomon's Portico - the part of the Temple not rebuilt by Herod which looked over the Kidron valley towards Gethsemene and we are told that it is Winter. I'm not really sure whether the geography helps. But, we are also told that the conversation we heard in the Gospel takes place between Jesus and the Judeans (not the Jews) who are the Jewish authorities opposed to those who wish to follow Jesus. But I note a slightly different context for this passage also present. Jesus speaks to us - 8 months into my ministry amongst you as parish priest - we too, with those Judeans, are people who want to know plainly who Jesus is and what His Way means for us.

I am sure we would all agree that we are known by Jesus. We are part of His family by virtue of our Baptism. To be known by Jesus could mean that He has a casual awareness of us but that wouldn't make sense in the context of the Gospels. To be known by Jesus is something to do with a deep understanding of our motives and values; to know us intimately. To be known by Jesus is to be deeply loved by

him. But in terms of hearing Jesus' voice, you might argue, well, that's more complex. I will take it as read that we physically cannot hear the actual voice of Jesus any longer, but I will suggest that there are strong and accepted understandings that the voice of Christ is heard clearly speaking to us through scripture; in worship; in silence; through others; through the beauty and struggle of the world around us. In response to Christ speaking to us in those contexts, our task is to follow - to live lives shaped by the pattern of His living and loving. That's not easy, but nonetheless, our task as the church, is to do that - to seek to follow. To live and love as He does, and to call others to do the same.

June 2025

Since I arrived as parish priest here, we have been trying to listen for Jesus' voice. Much of what ministry has looked like over the last 8 months has been as a result of this. I have been seeking to listen and respond to what you asked of me in the parish profile; I have sought to listen to what many of you have asked for; I have also sought to listen to His voice through prayer and discernment together, all, so that we might follow where Jesus' leads.



In the profile you asked that I would nurture the congregation through prayer, preaching and teaching; that I would be approachable, collaborative, and empathetic; that I would be keen to get out into the community and to undertake pastoral visiting; that I would be a leader who can and does encourage and

enable people to use their talents and to work together; and that I would with ambition and enthusiasm, seek to grow the church in size, in faith and in the love of God. I hope that you see that I have been endeavouring to do all of that from day one and this remains my goal. On top of all of that, and by way of reinforcing those hopes - when several of you asked for chances to discuss and learn matters of faith we responded - Advent and Lent discussion groups have been well attended and appreciated. I am regularly pastorally visiting a small but growing group of people across the parish and we are in the process of establishing a pastoral group which I hope will draw in some of you into two key roles in pastoral ministry - visiting and praying. We will continue to encourage prayer individually and corporately - please do keep an eye out for some resources that will help us learn and grow in confidence. Praying keeps us focused on God's will and purposes for us. Keep an eye out also for opportunities for us to deepen our understanding of the richness of our faith. Understanding how to follow Christ more effectively builds confidence in our faith and that is attractive to others. Alongside the pastoral group we are also establishing a social committee who will plan events and activities that will be about building community, fun and fundraising.

The church building is open most days from 8am til 5pm. I am often here to pray over the course of any given day and as a result I have met local folks who come in for a myriad of reasons and have had the chance to have some profound conversations and I have told you of some of those encounters. I am visible in the community - walking the dogs most days - but I have also sought to meet with my ecumenical colleagues and get actively involved in Churches Together; local headteachers and schools and other community groups and organisations. I am a governor at Simon Balle school and Abel Smith school and through a growing round of regular assemblies, I am becoming more well known to the pupils and staff.

There are also two community art projects under discussion which have come about through seeking to be present in the community and getting know folks. Through new partnerships with Street Food Heroes we are intentionally trying to draw a different demographic to the area around the church building. We are going to begin to explore a brave vision of how we can not only be a community that welcomes all, but can offer this beautiful and extraordinary space for use by the wider community through launching a new toddler group in the Autumn and much, much more. I hope you are as excited as I am about the present and the future and where God is leading us together.

When Jesus talks of following here, it is the same following he called his first disciples to. To accept Him as our rabbi, our teacher, and to follow him - walking in the dust of his shoes - walking behind him, listening to what he says and watching what he does so we can each seek to speak and act in the same ways. And that's the thing - the faith we are called to friends, is not something we seek to accrue - having more of it means that we are guaranteed a place with God in heaven. No, following Jesus is just that. A lifestyle choice that makes a difference in our living and loving in the now.

What is Jesus asking of us? To follow. All of us. To find our trust in him deepened and to seek to live and love like him. None of what I've mentioned above can happen without you responding to Jesus' voice. This is not only what I hope that All Saints will continue to grow to become - a community of confident disciples - but it's Jesus' desire for us. Keep listening for His voice together with me, and let's individually and as a church community, seek to follow.

Pray.

Simon

## Simon's 25th

On 29/6 I celebrate 25 years since I was ordained a priest.

This is a significant personal milestone as you might imagine, but I believe that priestly ministry gains significance when exercised amongst the wider Christian community - all of you!

Therefore our worship that morning will be a special Eucharist at which I will preside.

Our preacher that day will be training incumbent, Canon Robert Sibson.

The service will be followed by a Bring and Share lunch at which I would love it if many of you stayed to celebrate further with me.

## **Annual Meetings**

These were held on 11th May. Copies of the reports and draft minutes are available on our website at https://www.allsaintshertford.org/ apcm.php and at the back of church.

What follows is a summary of key points:

### Churchwardens

Janet Bird and Verity Tranter were duly nominated and elected to serve as Churchwardens for 2025-26.

### **Electoral Roll**

Our new Roll has 65 electors, 32 resident in the Parsh and 33 non-resident.

### **Report on PCC and Church Activities**

A key activity for the PCC in general, and it's two representatives in particular, was the creation of a Parish Profile as we sought to discern what we would like, what we needed and what we offered a new incumbent. Much effort, thought and prayer went into this. We were delighted to meet Simon in May and that he agreed to join us in a joyous celebration in September, along with Alex and family.

In parallel much effort went into ensuring that the life of the church continued 'as usual'. We are very grateful to the various priests within the Deanery and beyond who supported us so well.

Janet Bird took most of the services on the occasions when no priest was available—either as a Service of the Word or Holy Communion by Extension. Thank you!

One 'technical' decision was to formally apply for the dissolution of the Hertford Team Ministry as a formal entity. All churches in the Team have done so and so, in due course, the Team will be legally dissolved. At that point Simon will cease to be 'Priest-in-Charge' and will assume the incumbency of All Saints as a standalone parish.

Lastly, it was encouraging to see number attending over the Advent/Christmas Season returning to almost pre-pandemic levels with over 4,500 attending at least one service.

### Safeguarding

We were pleased to appoint Lyn Paddon as our safeguarding officer and she has helped us

work our way through the various steps that are necessary to be a "best practice parish fully compliant with requirements".

We held our first-ever Safeguarding Sunday on the 17<sup>th</sup> November which was very well received. We also used the day to organise a training session after the morning service for anyone who couldn't access online training facilities at home. This saw quite a number of people attending. It was beneficial in that it gave a group of folk the chance to discuss issues that arose from the video that we watched together, with time for prayer and reflection.

Also in November after discussion with Rev Simon we began the task of looking at our church in the context of a healthy culture survey. This was given out to all members of All Saints. The response to the survey was quite good and after collating the paperwork, we set up a small focus group consisting of Rev Simon, Churchwarden Verity and myself to look at the results and to ascertain what as a church we already do to promote a safe and healthy environment and what still needs work. It is a very useful tool in moving our church forward.

### Individual group reports

Most of our regular activities continued and most have at least some element of community engagement—either through particular events—such as Soundbites, EcoWatch, School Viists/Services/Awards Ceremonies or in involving members of the community in their running.

### Finance

The formal statutory accounts for the PCC were approved by the PCC trustees on 19<sup>th</sup> March and have been filed with the Diocese and the Charity Commission.

Our General Fund was almost exhausted by the end of 2024, having had £22,000 support from the Memorial Fund in 2023. The deficit for the year was £14,903, somewhat better than budgeted primarily through better results from Soundbites and other events and an easing of the previous very high utility bills. Formal support from the Memorial Fund was required to ensure that the accounts could be drawn up on a going concern basis.

Our Fabric Fund was down to  $\pounds 2,640$  having spent  $\pounds 17,682$  on repairs in 2024, principally on security (CCTV and roof alarms) and the heating system.

The Organ Fund was bolstered by a legacy of  $\pounds15,000$  but spent  $\pounds7,702$  on repairs. It had  $\pounds17,815$  at the year end.

The Music Development Fund was exhausted in 2024 as planned, and music grants were funded from the Choir Legacy Fund, which stood at  $\pounds16,070$  at the end of 2024.

The Memorial Fund started out at £339,225 and ended 2024 with £315,723, having transferred its interest to the General Fund, paid for the decoration and carpets at the Vicarage and the installation of CCTV in the church.

### **Church Fabric**

In compliance with the church insurers because of some windows on the south side being damaged, CCTV cameras were installed. In consultation with the installation company and the insurers they were positioned all around outside of the church. Unfortunately, soon after installation two of the cameras on the south side were removed/vandalised. These were quickly replaced and cage-like structures were put over them to deter further attempts at "removal". At the same time Wi-Fi was installed with restricted use.

Ongoing issues that remain are the South Aisle Roof and the Church heating system.

Repeated attempts at contact with the Architect have resulted in the Architect appointing a specialist contractor to come and inspect the roof-hopefully within the next few months.

After much discussion with various parties about types of heating suitable for our church, the PCC decided that new eco-friendly boilers are the best option available to us. We are in the process of contacting two companies who have experience in the field of church heating to come and inspect and give us advice. During maintenance on the current boiler, a scaffolding tower was used to adjust the ball cocks of the header tanks in the organ transept.

The organ developed an intermittent fault in the wind system which caused the organ to be unusable for a short time. Happily, the repair was completed quite quickly.

A new photocopier has been installed in the vestry.

PCC approved a request to erect a memorial plaque in church for Brian Bromley, celebrating

the many years of music making and training of new musicians for All Saints. A faculty was sought and subsequently we have received diocesan approval. It will be sited near the organ and be in a similar style to the others there.

We held a "clear up" days, August before Simon's installation service which was a general tidy up. Another was planned for early 2025.

The Church notice boards have also been de -cluttered and re-appropriated.

As ever huge thanks to the Work Party for all they do for us in both Church and Hall.

### Hall

A new boiler has been installed.

A new booking system has been set up and is proving much more effective/efficient. Thanks to Maruo Jorge, Nick Hassell and Martin Penny for setting this up and managing the migration from the old system.

### **Deanery Synod**

Deanery Synod met three times in 2024. In March time was spent reflecting on possible futures for the Deanery, looking at structures, finance and people.

July saw elections to Diocesan Synod and a BBQ giving members a chance to deepen friendships, share ideas, issues ands best practices,

The November meeting was joined by Kate Ford, Diocesan Giving Officer to discuss ways of growing generous giving, including modern mechanisms and communications.

In addition the Synod team have put together a number of ways to provide mutual support and advice.

Anyone interested can register at www.hertfordandwaredeanery.org.uk/ register

### Election of Lay Representatives PCC

There were two vacancies for new Lay members to serve from 2025-2028. One completed nomination was submitted, and Dorothy Toyn was duly elected. One incomplete nomination was submitted, and that person will hopefully be elected by the PCC (as per Church Representation Rules M16 and M18).

### Questions not covered above

As we are already in May a number of things have happened in 2025 that were referred to in questions/reports.

Key items:

- 1. We have two quotations re replacing the heating system and expect to come to a conclusion soon.
- 2. A systematic inspection of the roof was made on Monday 12th May.
- We have received a further £155,000 from the Metcalfe estate and so are well able to take some time to plan and deliver growth as outlined in Simon's Sermon.

### Thanks

In thanking Rev Simon, Janet Bird highlighted the positive changes since Simon's arrival and how renewed, refreshed and revitalised we feel.

In response, Simon spoke warmly of the willingness of the PCC and all to work with him as the new incumbent. He asked for appreciation to be shown by a round of applause and he prayed over the new PCC.

The meeting was followed by a very short meeting of the new PCC to confirm formal appointments and then a 'Bring and Share' lunch.

### Thy Kingdom Come/ Pray for 5



Thy Kingdom Come Is a global prayer initiative to encourage Christians across the world to pray between the Feast of the Ascension to the Feast of Pentecost (8 June) for more people to come to the love of God for all in Jesus. I'd like us to join Christians worldwide doing two things: 1. Please pray the words of the Lord's Prayer every day between those dates. The Archbishop of York has produced a really helpful booklet of daily reflections for you to use daily as you pray. You can download it for free here <u>https://</u> www.thykingdomcome.global/sites/ default/files/2025-03/TKC%20Novena% 202025%20DIGITAL.pdf

2. Pray join the Global church in participating in 5 at 5.

There are small business card type prayer cards available at the back of church.

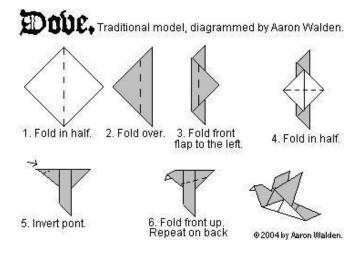
Please prayerfully think about 5 people you know who do not yet share your faith. Write their names in the five spaces on your card, and pray for them using the simple prayer on the card, every day at 5pm.

Please bring those used prayer cards back to church on the Feast of Pentecost and we will collect them in as part of the Offertory that day, and offer those people to God.

Thank you Simon

Watch a short video made by Simon at https://www.youtube.com/shorts/-3lesllrjYk

### Doves for Pentecost at All Saints Can you help please?



We are hoping to make a special display for Pentecost, for which we need to have **LOTS** of paper Doves! They can easily be made by folding paper -ORIGAMI - and the instructions are on the previous page. Other patterns are available online.

You can use any paper, cut to a square but standard white paper can be quite thick to fold, so there are some packs available with a pattern and some thinner Origami paper to get you going. I have more paper if required.

When folded, please place them in the red box at the back of the church. We will need them by Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June please.

I also have some Dove patterns to cut out and stick – if anyone is interested, please let me know.

Many thanks. Dorothy

### Dear friends in All Saints!

Thank you for wanting to be friends with us! Fr Simon has sent us names of people in key roles in All Saint's, and below I have added some of ours.

I think it will be a great thing working together towards an agreement and a covenant between our two parishes. I think it is vital for a parish to remember that we are part of the Church Universal, not just the Christian community in Kärna, or even the Church of Sweden. We belong together!

This last Sunday my sermon was (partly) on Jesus calling the disciples 'friends', and that we dare to think of ourselves as friends also: Friends to Our Lord, and also – by his command, friends to each other. In our parish, in our community, and also in our wider context of the Church.

This week, leading up to "Rogate" Sunday, we will focus more on praying together. We have a (still quite modest) initiative to start a prayer community in our parish, praying for each other, for our community and our city, and for the Church – especially for our new friends in Hertford! The "Amici Orantes" (friends who pray) will hopefully bring a renewed gladness in praying together.

We are also looking forward to visiting you! I'm

bringing a group of 21 teenage confirmands and young confirmation leaders on a pilgrimage to Walsingham, and we will stay in your St John's Hall and celebrate mass with you on June 15th! Perhaps we will meet many of you in church that Sunday! And hopefully, we will also have a baptism of one of the confirmands. Great joy! We are very excited about this – for many of the teenagers, it will be their first time visiting the UK.



Young adult confirmands, confirmed during the Easter vigil and mass in Kaga church fr Olof (left) and Hanna Henriks (2<sup>nd</sup> left) will be in the group visiting All Saint's in June

Later this summer, some of the young adults in our parish will go to Stockholm for a ecumenical gathering on invitation from all the Church of Sweden bishops. This will be a celebration of 1 700 years since the first ecumenical council in Nicaea, where our Creed was being formulated. It's also 100 years since Swedish archbishop ++Nathan Söderblom invited all the church families (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, ...) to Stockholm for an ecumenical meeting on "Time for God's Peace". That meeting was in many ways the start of the ecumenical movement in the Church of Sweden. Hopefully, I'll be able to give you a short report later in the year...

For now: You are in our prayers, as we hope that we are in yours. And we are very much looking forward to getting to know you all a bit better through prayer and meeting...

God bless you! /fr Olof

Please pray for our PCC, our Church wardens and the staff at Kärna parish:

### PCC:

Fredrik Svensson, Reidar Krokstad, Agneta Sunesson, Leif Dahlberg, Ann Kristin Anesvärd, Jacob Gustafsson, Marie Lagerfelt, Katja Wiebe, Frida Biriell Mauritzdotter

### Church wardens:

Sofia Anderzon, Annika Fällström, Lena Gustavsson, Anita Hedman, Stefan Hermansson, Bengt Olsson, Monica Tobiasson, Anna Unosson, Markus Murevärn

### Staff:

Priests: fr Olof (rector), Johanna Olovson, Magnus Fröhler, Annie Johnsson (curate) Organists: David Kronström, Karl Bolmvall Staff: Annika Andersson, Andreas Andrén Hjärtström, Hanna Karlsson, Anette Ählström, Maud Heljelid, Stefan Rylander, Maija Karppinen Berger, Kjell Tedenstrand, Åsa Bejke, David Hellqvist

### Soundbites



# GreenWatch



Clive Fleming, a local swift enthusiast leads the Hertford Swift Group. Marking the start of Swift Awareness week 2025, our June GreenWatch talk looks at work in Hertford and the surrounding area to help this much-loved bird.

# HERTFORDSHIRE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC



Join us for an inspiring week of music, reflection, and community as we mark 80 years since the end of World War II. From stirring orchestral works to intimate recitals, historical talks, and inclusive performances, this year's festival explores themes of remembrance, renewal, and hope.

#### Festival Highlights HERTFORDSHIRE FESTIVAL STRING ORCHESTRA FROM SHADOWS TO LIGHT • JAZZ CELEBRATION BROMPTON STRING QUARTET • HERTFORD WARTIME DISCOVERIES SOUNDBITES: SARAH-JANE BRADLEY IN RECITAL THE LANDSCAPE OF THE WANDERER: PAUL NASH... and more!

Online booking at: <u>www.hertsmusicfest.org.uk/events2025</u> Herts Festival of Music | Instagram | Facebook | LinkedIn Artistic Director: James Francis Brown



## How to spot Swifts, Swallows, and Martins



Have you spotted some beautiful silhouettes darting and diving in the summer sky? Swifts, swallows. house martins and sand martins are all summer visitors to the UK. While the swift spends most of its time soaring high

in the sky, the swallow or 'barn swallow' might be seen perching on a wire, or roosting in a reedbed.

Top tips to work out what you might have spotted at

https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife/howidentify/how-identify-swifts-swallows-sandmartins-and-house-martins

## Parish Diary June 2025

#### Sunday 1st 7th Sunday of Easter 10.00 am All Ages Together Communion 6.30 pm Service of Meditation and Prayer Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> 8.00 am Morning Prayer 10.30 am Service at Bentley House 5.00 pm **Evening Prayer** Tuesday 3rd (Martyrs of Uganda) 8.00 am Morning Prayer 5.00 pm **Evening Prayer** Wednesday 4th (Petroc) 8.00 am Morning Prayer 12.00 for 1.00 pm Soundbites Emma Halnan - Flute Antonio Oyarzabal—Piano 5.00 pm Evening Prayer Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> (Boniface) 8.00 am Morning Prayer 11.00 am Holy Communion 5.00 pm Evening Prayer 7.30 pm All Saints Art Friday 6<sup>th</sup> (Ini Japuria) 5.30 pm Choir Practices Saturday 7th 9.30 am Morning Prayer **HFoM** Concert 5.00 pm Sunday 8th Pentecost 10.00 am Parish Communion/HFoM Festival Service 6.30 pm Choral Evensong Monday 9th (Columba) 8.00 am Morning Prayer 10.30 am Service at Bentley House 5.00 pm Evening Prayer Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> 8.00 am Morning Prayer 5.00 pm **Evening Prayer** Weds 11<sup>th</sup> (Barnabas) 8.00 am Morning Prayer 12.00 for 1.00 pm Soundbites /HFoM Sarah-Jane Bradley – Viola James Francis Brown - Piano 5.00 pm **Evening Prayer** 7.00 pm Holy Communion 7.30 pm PCC Thursday 12th

8.00 am	Morning Prayer
5.00 pm	Evening Prayer

	July Jule 2023
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> 5.30 pm	Choir Practices
9.30 am 2.00 pm	<b>4<sup>th</sup> (Richard Baxter)</b> Morning Prayer Open rehearsal HFoM HFoM Orchestral Concert
10.00 am	Trinity Sunday Parish Communion Choral Compline
8.00 am 10.30 am	6 <sup>th</sup> (Richard, bishop) Morning Prayer Service at Bentley House Evening Prayer
8.00 am	<b>7<sup>th</sup> (Samuel &amp; Henrietta Barnett)</b> Morning Prayer Evening Prayer
	<b>ay 18™ (Bernard Mizeki)</b> . <b>00 pm</b> Soundbites Adrian Oldland—Piano
	9 <sup>th</sup> (Corpus Christi) Morning Prayer
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> 5.30 pm	Choir Practices
Saturday 2 9.30 am 5.00 pm	Morning Prayer Concert by HCS
10.00 am	Parish Communion Choral Evensong
Monday 23 8.00 am 10.30 am 5.00 pm	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> (Etheldreda, abbess)</b> Morning Prayer Service at Bentley House Evening Prayer
8.00 am 12.00 noor	4 <sup>th</sup> (Birth of John the Baptist) Morning Prayer Holy Communion Evening Prayer
8.00 am	<b>ay 25<sup>th</sup> (Ember Day)</b> Morning Prayer <b>.00 pm</b> Soundbites Krassimira Jeliazkova—Violin
5 00 nm	Elizabeth Mucha - Piano

### Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>

5.00 pm

8.00 amMorning Prayer11.00 amHoly Communion4.00-9.00 pm Street Food Heroes5.00 pmEvening Prayer7.30 pmAll Saints Art

**Evening Prayer** 

# Friday 27th (Cyril, bishop)5.30 pmChoir Practices

#### Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> (Iraneous. Bishop)

9.00 amWork Party9.30 amMorning Prayer11.30 amGreenWatch Coffee12.00 noonLight Lunches1.00 pmTalk by Clive Fleming7.00 pmConcert by Lumos

### Sunday 29th St Peter and St Paul

10.00 am Parish Communion Preacher Canon Robert Sibson
12.00 noon Bring & Share Lunch
6.30 pm Eucharist with prayer and anointing for healing

#### Monday 30th

8.00 am Morning Prayer10.30 am Service at Bentley House5.00 pm Evening Prayer

JULY Tuesday 1st 8.00 am Morning Prayer

5.00 pm Evening Prayer

### Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> (Henry, John & Henry Venn)

8.00 am Morning Prayer5.00 pm Evening Prayer

#### Thursday 3rd

8.00 amMorning Prayer11.00 amHoly Communion5.00 pmEvening Prayer7.30 pmAll Saints Art

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> (Thomas the Apostle)

11.00 amHoly Communion5.30 pmChoir Practices

#### Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>

9.30 am Morning Prayer7.45 pm Concert by HSO

#### Sunday 6th 3rd Sunday after Trinity

10.00 am All Ages Together Communion6.30 pm Service of Meditation and Prayer

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Full list of contacts www.allsaintshertford.org/contacts.php

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