

Giving/Vision Sunday 2025

I gave a report at our annual meeting about what we have been up to and where I think we are going as a church. I have been part of All Saints now for 4 and a half years. We have seen a fair bit of change and our attendance across all our services are increasing which is amazing to see God do.

Our one-line vision here is that All Are Welcome. We are an inclusive church, and we welcome all who are looking for or on a spiritual journey. We affirm and celebrate all who walk through our doors, and we journey with everyone on their path of faith.

Our vision of All are Welcome is divided into three areas: All are Welcome at the door – focussing on our worship. All are Welcome to the building – focussing on the work and upkeep of our buildings. All are Welcome beyond our front door – focussing on outreach and sharing the story of Jesus beyond our church walls.

For 2025/2026 I want to focus on our All are Welcome beyond our front door. We have had a sermon series on sharing our story and God's story to those who don't yet know it. This I know can be a daunting task. But as a reminder we don't have to share our whole story, we don't have to convert or convince people in one short conversation.

Be natural with it, share some parts of your story, be humble when you don't know the answer – its ok to say you don't know or don't understand. Think about, and practice even, what you would say, knowing a bit of a script helps you to answer questions people may have.

In doing this I pray that we become bolder in sharing with others. The challenge for this year that I would like you to consider, and the reason you have an invitation before you, is to pray about someone who you could invite to church or share a coffee with and chat about your faith.

The reason I have given you an invitation is because I want you to put this with your bible, or your journal or diary, or anywhere you see often when you are praying to God – even the back of the toilet door in your house if needs be! But somewhere you see as a reminder to pray and invite someone to come to church.

We have lots going on here, especially in this next term, we have Harvest, Hot chocolates on Hill Top, our Memorial Service for those who have died, Remembrance Sunday, Makers Market, and all the events at Christmas – the Carol Service being a great opportunity to invite friends and neighbours who don't yet come to church.

Who is the person, or people you would invite to come along and hear the story of God?

Take that invitation, put it somewhere you see often to remind you to pray, pray for the opportunity to share, pray for the person to respond positively, pray for boldness.

If everyone here brought one person to church with them our community will have doubled!
It's that easy!

But to do that we need to make sure the lights are on and in the coming months especially the heat! And to do that we need to make sure we have the finances to do so. This is the awkward conversation, no one likes talking about money and giving. We can get a bit defensive in case people ask how much are you giving? Or we can get a bit guilty because we can't offer much but offer all we can.

Giving is essential for our church to keep worshipping and serving our community. To provide a place for people to gather, to share, to laugh and to cry, a place for people to call home. We have seen in the past year our giving has slowly increased, and it is going in the right direction but that doesn't mean we sit back and stop.

It's our giving that allows for the lights and the heating but also to supply hot chocolates and marshmallows to the hoards of trick and treaters on Halloween, to supply sandwiches at the Friendship Café, to supply the all-important party tea for Messy Church, for the notice sheets at services, for tea and coffee on a Sunday, for us to source new robes for new choir members.

It also allows those who are mourning to find a place of comfort, for those who are celebrating a community who joins in with their joy, and, for someone searching to find God.

When we give, we allow our doors to be open for all to be celebrated and affirmed in their journey with the living God. There are many ways to give and Kate our treasurer has given you all a letter that tells you about the many different ways in which you can give to All Saints Church.

This year it would be great to see each and every spot on our pews full at Christmas and beyond, it would be great to see more people give their lives to following Jesus, it would be great to have a door that doesn't stick in the rain!

We get to do this together and together we can invite one person that we encounter beyond our door to come and sit with us and begin their journey. Amen.