

March 2021
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SAINTS ALIVE



ALL SAINTS

The Parish Magazine
of All Saints' Parish Church,
Cheadle Hulme

INFORMATION PAGE

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Holy Communion (2nd in month)

10.00am Parish Eucharist

6.30pm Evensong

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Holy Communion

Thursday 10.00am.

Holy Days to be announced.

Matins

Daily at 9.00am.

CONFESSION AND SPIRITUAL COUNSELLING

By arrangement with the Clergy.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR BAPTISMS, BANNES AND WEDDINGS

All enquiries to Rev'd Janet Bacon
(485 3455).

MOTHERS' UNION

Corporate Communion 10.00am on the
2nd Thursday in Church. Details of all
meetings are in Saints Alive and weekly
notices. See Notice Board.

MENS' SOCIETY

Monthly meetings on the 1st Thursday,
September to May, at 7.30pm in the
Meeting Room.

Chairman: Mr Bradley Torbitt (486 9387).

Secretary: Mr Mike Parry (485 7886).

FRIDAY CLUB

Fortnightly meetings on Friday evening
usually in the Meeting Room at 7.30pm.

Open to women of all age groups.

Chairman is Lily Mitchelhill (485 5187)

Secretary is Julia Ball (440 8647)

JAMES GROUP

The James Group exists to encourage the
Church's ministry of healing, and the practice
of regular intercession for the sick.

The branch meets monthly to say an Office
of Intercession: there is also a monthly
Corporate Communion. For further information
please contact: The Secretary: Pat Yates
(485 4546).

BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP

Secretary: Mrs Julia Ball (440 8647).

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Cubs: (7th Cheadle Hulme) Meet on a Friday
6.30pm - 8.00pm at Thorn Grove.

Andrew Thompson

email:andy.thompson@cheadlescouts.org.uk

Beavers: (7th Cheadle Hulme)

Meet on a Friday 6.00pm - 7.15pm in the
Parish Rooms.

Brownies: (11th Cheadle Hulme)

Meet on a Monday 6.00pm - 7.15pm at
Thorn Grove.

Jo Taylor

brownow11ththeadleulme@yahoo.com

Rainbows: (2nd Cheadle Hulme)

Meet on a Monday 6.00pm - 7.00pm





Vicar's Letter

Dear friends,

The first two months of 2021 haven't quite been how we expected. We thought we would leave the pandemic in 2020, yet here we are in March and still our lives are affected by it. We have the hope of vaccines that are being rolled out but it can be hard to think where is hope. We are a few weeks into Lent and usually during Lent we give things up, chocolate, alcohol, cake. However, this year our Archdeacon Ian Bishop has put out the challenge of taking something up instead. In the past year we have given up so much, sometimes out of choice but more than likely it has been forced.

Perhaps this year we could take up being generous – perhaps making a cake to give to our neighbours, or take up spending more time with God, whether that be reading our bibles, praying or just appreciating creation around us. During the month of Lent we spend the 40 days looking forward to the hope of Easter. The hope of a God who became flesh, dealt with a death of a friend, showed compassion to those who were hungry and brought healing to those who were afflicted. The hope that God can use us to support those who have lost loved ones, support the foodbanks and campaign that no child goes hungry in the holidays and to show our appreciation and support to the NHS by washing our hands often, and socially distancing when we are out and about.

Hope can be found in the small or in the big things of life. Today during this season of Lent the hope of God can be found in the words of the Psalmist:

- 20 We wait in hope for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.
- 21 In him our hearts rejoice,
for we trust in his holy name.
- 22 May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,
even as we put our hope in you.
- Psalm 33:20-22



*Be assured of my prayers for you, every blessing,
Rev Sarah*

**COPY DEADLINE FOR APRIL - MARCH 6TH
ALL COPY TO THE EDITOR PLEASE**

Finding God in Each Moment of the Day



Do you know the popular series of books entitled *Where's Wally?* These books are filled with very detailed cartoon drawings in each of which is hidden Wally. He is dressed in a red and white striped ski cap and glasses and the challenge is to find Wally. You have to search for some time to pick him out of the crowd, but Wally is always there!

In many ways, like finding Wally, we need to develop the skill of identifying God's presence in our daily lives.

One approach that can help us to find God throughout the day is to do a daily review of our day with God. It can provide us with a means of seeing where God has been at work during our day. It's an opportunity of remembering how God has been at work and how we have responded to Him. As the psalmist says,

'On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night' (Psalms 63:6).

What does this look like in practice? Here is a step by step guide:

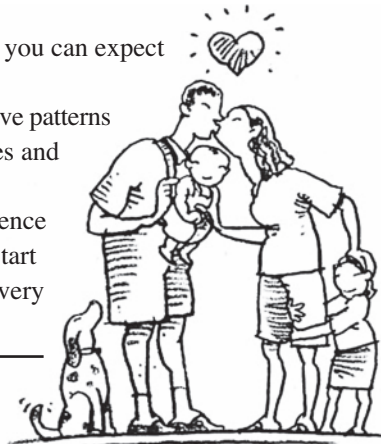
1. Be still for a moment, and quiet your mind.
2. Acknowledge that Jesus is present. Invite Him to guide you.
3. Recall the beginning of the day, when you first woke up. Watch that scene, as if on film. What is your reaction to what you see? Talk to God about it.
4. Continue through the film of your day, going from scene to scene. As you reflect on each one, some scenes may fill you with gratitude, others with regret. Speak directly to God about this. You may also want to pray for those you encountered during the day.
5. End your review with a prayer of thanksgiving for God's mercy and love. Ask him to refresh you as you sleep.

As you begin reviewing your day with God regularly, you can expect to see two things beginning to happen:

Firstly, you will become more aware of recurring negative patterns in your life, which will challenge these wrong attitudes and habits and increase your desire to grow and change.

Secondly, you will become more aware of God's presence in the ordinary moments of your life. And when you start experiencing the reality of God's presence with you every day, it's not ordinary any more!

Regret is a waste of energy; you can't build on it; it's only good for wallowing in. Katherine Mansfield



When your prayer is not answered

2 Cor. 12:8; 'Three times I asked the Lord about this... BUT...'

Paul is talking about one of the most mysterious and one of the most baffling aspects of prayer – when God does not say yes.

On the face of it, Paul's prayer was very modest. For some time he had been troubled by 'a thorn in the flesh.' He doesn't tell us what the 'thorn' was and down the centuries theologians and commentators have made suggestions. Most of them have thought that the affliction was physical because Paul says it was 'in the flesh.' Some have suggested that he suffered from epileptic fits which caused him to fall down, while others have suggested that he was laid low by constant fevers or that he had very poor eyesight, the last based on his remarks in Galatians 6:11. But in spite of this great servant of the Lord praying earnestly three times that the thorn would be removed, God did not answer as Paul expected. A number of things in this passage (verses 7-10) are very helpful to all of us in the matter of prayer.

First, although God's answer was not what Paul asked for, God did answer him. God is never indifferent to the prayers we utter from the depth of our heart. Unlike the idol Baal in the Old Testament story about Elijah, (1 Kings 18) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus is not on a journey, nor is He busy elsewhere, nor is He sleeping. He hears our prayers and our cries when we come to Him in our need and pain and distress.

Second, although Paul did not get the answer he wanted, God made him a wonderful promise. He said, 'My grace is sufficient for you' (v.9). This was not what Paul asked for, yet what a promise it was! God said in effect. 'I will not take the thorn away – but my daily grace is all-sufficient.' In spite of the thorn, Paul will triumph. When God gives us all-sufficient grace, it will take care of everything in our lives.

Thirdly, Paul learnt that God's wonderful grace meant that in his weakness 'the power of Christ' (v.9) would be with him, the power that would make him effective and fruitful in his ministry.

Fourthly, this experience taught Paul that he could be 'content with weaknesses and insults' (v.10) because it was for Christ's sake, and when he is weak in himself, he is strong in Christ (v.10).

So what about unanswered prayer? Unless our prayer was selfish and not for our good in the first place, God does answer our cry. When the answer is not what we expected, then it means that our loving Father has something for us even better and more important than what we asked for.

Dr Herbert McGonigle was formerly Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology and Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester



One far fierce hour and sweet



Where I lived in Lincolnshire there was a sheltered pasture where a group of donkeys spent their winter, on holiday from their summer job of giving children rides on seaside beaches.

I thought of other donkeys, in South Asian countries, who are true “beasts of burden”, carrying heavy loads of coal or bricks, from mines and brick kilns. I am glad to support a charity that promotes the wellbeing of working horses and donkeys around the world. G K Chesterton in his poem

The Donkey, portrays an animal put together in a moment of mayhem

“When fishes flew and forests walked... with monstrous head and sickening cry...”, an object of ridicule and abuse:

“The tattered outlaw of the earth, Of ancient crooked will;

Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb...” but:

“...I also had my hour; One far fierce hour and sweet:

There was a shout about my ears, and palms before my feet.”

At the end of March we will celebrate Palm Sunday; we hope to be able to sing

“Ride on, ride on in Majesty!” written by Henry Milman, Dean of St Paul’s, who was born in 1791. The first verse, in spite of the air of jubilation, hints at the irony of the scene:

“...Hark all the tribes hosanna cry:

thy humble beast pursues his road...”

Conquering heroes arrive on proud chargers, not workaday donkeys! Even with the triumphant shouts of the crowd in his ears, Jesus knew how it would end; he acknowledged the prophetic symbolism (“I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would cry out.”), but when he came within sight of Jerusalem he wept over the city’s future fate. His own betrayal, suffering and death were fast approaching. The hymn dramatises the contrast between the excited pomp, the hosannas, and Jesus’ forthcoming suffering,

“The winged squadrons of the sky

look down with sad and wond’ring eyes

to see th’approaching sacrifice.”

But beyond Gethsemane and Calvary lies the promise of Easter:

“Ride on, ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die;

bow thy meek head to mortal pain,

then take, O God, thy power and reign.” *Douglas Scarisbrick*



With all your soul, strength and mind

I believe there were two key elements to gathered worship.

The first is that there should be a welcome for everyone.

The second I'd like to propose is that gathered worship is absolutely concentrated on enabling and allowing our hearts and souls to be closer to the God whom we are worshipping. In other words, whatever takes places, whatever words or music or readings, preaching, with or without Communion, whatever it is – is all intentionally allowing us to be closer to God.

Sounds very high and mighty doesn't it! To put it in simpler language: When I was ordained a deacon, my Training Incumbent told me that if I didn't know what I was doing or where I should be standing etc at any part of

the service, to just stay still. The aim was, at its worst, for me not to get between people and God. At its best, it was for me to help enable the gap to be closed.

I recall my very first service as a brand-new Deacon in a new part of the country and in a very different church from my previous experiences. The service was one I was completely unfamiliar with, so the Vicar said, 'It's easy, just do what I do. If I stand, you stand, and so on. Just follow me.'



Well I did. There were hymns, a chant from the choir, congregational anthems, Bible readings, intercessions, prayers and finally a money collection. I had followed the Vicar in every step, up and down to the altar, standing and sitting. It seemed to go on a long time! As he stood for what I thought was the final blessing, I rose with him and started to follow. But he stopped at the base of the pulpit and whispered, 'I'm going to give the sermon – you may sit!'

This month: Whether you physically go to a gathered service in church or are watching/participating online, have a look around you. Is this worship

drawing you in to God's love? Is it encouraging you to explore deeper what His love and grace means in your daily life? What's the attitude of those who are leading in any way, and that of the people around you? But most of all – what's our attitude?



How to gain contentment

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4,6-7)

I've been thinking a lot about contentment in the past couple of years, and have been struck by the fact that we can choose to be content.

As Paul says in Philippians 4:12, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation... whether living in plenty or in want." He doesn't explicitly tell us what the secret is – but the word 'learned' is significant.

Contentment isn't something we have to hope we might be given, or something that would blossom in our lives if only we received or achieved all the things we're longing for. Contentment isn't the result of everything being the way we want. Nor is it a gift randomly given to some people to enable them to bear difficult circumstances.

Rather, it is something we can learn, something we can actively pursue. We do that by choosing to seek Christ's glory over our own, to emulate His life of grumble-free humility, and to learn from others how to press on towards the goal of becoming more like Him. And we do it by choosing to rejoice. Paul doesn't say 'Rejoice in the Lord when things work out', or 'Hang in there; we'll be able to rejoice one day'. No, he commands us to rejoice in the Lord always. God is always good. There are always things to praise him for, in our plenty and in our want, in promotion or demotion, on a luxury holiday and in a long, lonely lockdown. (Isn't it interesting that Paul had to learn how to be content with plenty as well as with want? Even the dream job, ideal home, and perfect partner won't bring automatic contentment.)

This doesn't mean denying the reality of our situations. We can and should 'present (our) requests to God', we just do it in an attitude of thankfulness not anxiousness. And as we play our part, God will respond by giving us something greater than what we have asked for – He'll give us His peace, 'which transcends all understanding, (to) guard (our) hearts and (our) minds'.

True contentment is a gift from God – as indeed is everything good in life – but God in His goodness allows us to choose whether to receive it or not. So, make the choice: rejoice!



The rites of growing up



Now every year His parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up as usual... When the festival was ended... the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem... After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. (Luke 2)

This familiar story is the only account of Jesus in His boyhood years. Because of her fright, it would have been one family story that Mary never forgot.

At the age of 12, in that culture, Jesus would be just about to become a young man, and therefore have been eager to begin adulthood. Jesus knew He was not lost but in the right place. He said, “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

Children grow up by enormous leaps and bounds. Turn your back for a minute and they have aged years. In Britain, the law does not fix any one age for when a child is suddenly a grown up. Instead, it is a gradual process.

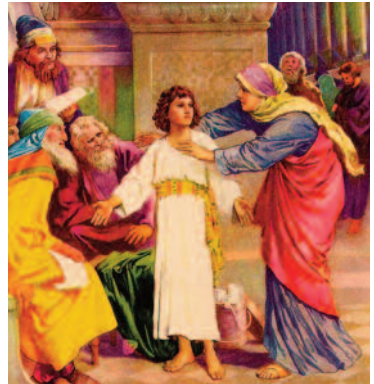
At age 10 you can have your ears pierced, but your parent may have to be with you, and you can be convicted of a criminal offence.

From age 13 you can work part-time. I remember getting a card from a doctor to show I could legally work. I carried it around with me on my milk round

and was slightly disappointed the police never asked for it! At 14 you can enter a pub, but only if the landlord allows it. You cannot buy or drink alcohol, only soft drinks.

At 16 you can marry, with your parents’ consent. You can also ride a moped, and drink alcohol in a restaurant with a meal. You can open a bank current account and get a debit card. Once you are 17, you can hold a driver’s licence. At 18 you can vote, get a tattoo, bet, and buy and drink alcohol in a pub. At 21 you can apply to adopt a child, become a driving instructor and apply for a licence to fly commercial transport aeroplanes and helicopters.

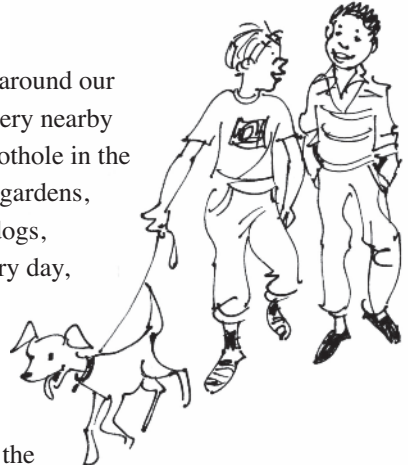
I suppose reading all this you might be wondering “why didn’t I do all these things as soon as I could?!”



Your daily walk should be a sacred ritual

Under lockdown, millions of us who rarely walked around our immediate locality are now well acquainted with every nearby driveway, every crack in the pavement, and every pothole in the road. We have developed views on our neighbours' gardens, on their oddly coloured garage doors, and on their dogs, children and cars. If we go out at the same time every day, we may even be saying hello to the same people we don't know every day.

For many of us, that daily walk has become the high point of our day. After all, it is one of the few liberties we have left. Some of us go early, to enjoy the relative peace and quiet. Some of us go midday, to at least see other people, even if we can't talk to them. Others of us opt for dusk, the dark comfort of a street with lit houses and stars in the sky. Whatever time you most enjoy, make sure you do make the time to go for your walk. Your mental and physical fitness can only improve!



Why not contact a lonely neighbour?

The public have been urged to write letters to their lonely neighbours, as the Government has announced a £7.5million cash injection for community-boosting activities.

It is hoped that people will “reach out virtually and help combat loneliness”, says Robert Jenrick, the Communities Secretary. This could be done either by “picking up the phone or writing a letter. Let’s all do what we can to connect with our older neighbours, in a Covid-secure way, so they feel less alone and know how valuable they are to their communities at this time.”

The charity Age UK has said it reckons there to be about 1.4million older people in England who are “chronically lonely.”

Battling bishop takes on the bookies

When a grieving family came to see the Bishop of St Albans, the encounter sparked a campaign that could transform the role of gambling in British public life.

Church of England bishop Alan Smith was deeply impacted by the visit from a family whose son had taken his life because of his struggle with problem gambling. In his role as a member of the House of Lords, he has since fought to combat gambling-related harm. Bishops who sit in the Lords are sometimes themselves reluctant to speak of their role in the House – concerned that some churchgoers may wish them to devote all their time to their dioceses. But the bishop's response to the family's grief demonstrates the positive role that CofE bishops in the Lords can play.

In a recent podcast interview with Church Times, the bishop recalled the visit from the family. "They sat in my study, they broke down.

They said we don't know what to do. We don't want this to happen to anyone else. Can you help? I felt very helpless.

I listened to them, prayed with them, then I put some questions down in the House of Lords."

It became clear that the government did not have a lot of statistics about the extraordinary growth in online gambling and the harm it was having, with possibly one or two people taking their lives every day in the UK. After he raised the issue, Bishop Smith was inundated with people writing to him. Many told him about a family member who had taken their life because of problem gambling and urging him to continue with the campaign.

Several years on, there are around 150 peers - the largest lobby group in the Lords – seeking to lessen the impact of problem gambling. A report by a Select Committee is calling for widespread changes to the Gambling Act dating from 2005. They want TV advertising of gambling to be restricted, and for the gambling industry to pay levies to meet the costs of tackling problem gambling. They point out that the NHS runs 14 problem gambling clinics at a time when funds are under desperate pressure. Bishop Smith is also concerned about what he describes as the 'gamblification' of sport. He explained: "When I was young, we loved watching football and cheering our side on, but you didn't have to gamble. The gambling industry has persuaded people that the need to bet is integral to sport."

The Bishop has called on the Football Association to lead the way in tackling gambling, rather than having to respond to mounting public concern. Debates around the bishops' role in the Lords will no doubt continue, with critics calling for their removal. Supporters say the bishops maintain strong grassroots contacts in their dioceses and bring perspectives from local organisations and people. Many bring insights from their work with charities and other non-governmental organisations, as well as an important faith perspective.



Green Pastures – the charity that finds homes for the homeless



Here is a story that went on to change many lives:

‘There was a knock at the door. Pete slowly opened his front door, and the stranger standing before him said in a quiet voice, “Please sir, do you have a bed for the night? I’m homeless.”’

Those words, spoken 20 years ago, stirred such compassion in Pete Cunningham’s heart that it moved him to action. Together with a church member, Vicki Woodley, a small pension was cashed in and Vicki re-mortgaged to put a deposit on two flats to house two homeless people, and Green Pastures was born.

The vision grew greater than they ever imagined. 20 years later, Green Pastures provides homes and support for over 1,100 people across the county, and is growing rapidly. The passion to release the Church to eradicate homelessness burns brightly. In partnership with many churches and charities, Green Pastures makes real change in the desperate situations in which many find themselves.

Investors are paid up to 5% to house the homeless.

Green Pastures buy property for churches and charities so that they can reach out and house the homeless in their area. They provide all the paperwork, expertise and ongoing support to operate successful supported housing projects. Green Pastures is a national Christian social enterprise that releases the Church to end homelessness.



The enormous changes in towns and individual lives can be seen everywhere around the country. Residents of partner, The Greenhouse Project, Plymouth, have experienced the faith of the support workers in their Green Pastures home to encounter Jesus through genuine caring relationship. One resident commented, “When I met the guys at The Greenhouse and saw how they love Jesus and the way that they were living for God, that appealed to me, and that helped me get back to faith, that helped me get back into recovery.” For how Green Pastures can help you, go to www.greenpastures.net or call 0300 365 4500.





The Upper Room

They meet together in the upper room
 Gathering together in one accord,
 He fetches a towel and washes their feet
 And Judas slips out to betray His Lord.

The bread and wine are there on the table,
 He takes up the bread and breaks it in two,
 The cup is passed round, each drinking
 from it,
 ‘These symbols,’ He says, ‘are given
 for you’.

‘This bread is my body I freely give
 This cup is my blood which will be shed’,
 They eat and they drink not really knowing
 Or understanding of what lies ahead.

A new covenant that night has been made
 Where God Himself gives His life for us all,
 The Life divine in exchange is given
 To free mankind from the curse of the fall.

Two thousand years on we come to partake
 Of His life poured out to cover our sin
 We eat and we drink the bread and the wine
 With thankful hearts in remembrance
 of Him.

Megan Carter



Letter to Joseph of Nazareth

(Mt 1:16, 18 –end, 13:55; Lk 1:48)

Joseph, son of Jacob,
 Descendant of Abraham,
 Carpenter of Nazareth,
 Who could have imagined
 What you would be called to do?

Loving Mary, pledged to the one
 Whom all generations would call blessed,
 Joseph, you responded to angelic advice
 And continued to love,
 Even when you woke up to shocking reality.

Joseph, you went forward in obedience
 and faith,
 Protecting and providing for your Mary
 and her Son,
 Passing on your working skills.

Joseph, often overlooked,
 Thank you for teaching Jesus
 How to do great things with wood.

Daphne Kitching

A battle for the heart

It has been said that the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. Lent is time set aside each year to take this thought seriously.

A few years ago, there was a story in the papers about a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. It is currently on display in the marvellous Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna; but the National Museum in Krakow claims ownership of the painting, and says that it was stolen in 1939 by the wife of the city's Nazi governor during the occupation of Poland. The painting, *The Fight Between Carnival and Lent*, was painted in 1559. It is a beautifully typical Bruegel. It is a large, crowded canvas with nearly 200 men, women, and children depicted. We find ourselves looking down on a town square during a riotous festival.

The painting can be looked at in two halves. On the right, we see a church and people leaving after prayer. We see them giving alms to the poor, feeding the hungry, helping those with disability, calling attention to their need, and tending to the dying. On the left, we see an inn. Congregated around it are beer-drinkers, gamblers, various saucy types. The vulnerable near by are not noticed, including a solitary procession of lepers. Instead, a man vomits out of a window, and another bangs his head against a wall.

In the foreground, we see two figures being pulled towards each other on floats. One is Lady Lent, gaunt and unshowy, dressed as a nun, with followers eating pretzels and fish and drawing fresh water from a large well.



The other is Carnival, a fat figure, armed with a meat spit and a pork-pie helmet. He is followed by masked carousers. A man in yellow, the symbolic colour of deceit, pushes his float — though he looks rather weighed down by cups and a bag of belongings. In the background, we see, on the left, some stark, leafless trees; but, on the right, buds are awakening on the branches, and, as if to see them better, a woman is busily cleaning her windows. It is an allegorical delight, and we might do worse than take a close look at it some time this Lent. It is tempting to classify each human there as either good or bad, secular or faithful, kind or indifferent. We love to place people into convenient cutlery trays, dividing them all up as is most useful for us. What I love about this painting, however, is that it reminds me that we are all similarly made with two halves.

For many of us, there is a constant fight going on within between the times when we are negligent and the times when we are careful; between days when we get through with a self that enjoys its own attention, being centre stage, and days when our self just feels somehow more itself when not being selfish.

I have an impulse to pray; I have an impulse to avoid or forget it. There are parts of me grotesquely masked, and there are parts trying to clean my windows on a ladder, as it were — wanting to increase my transparency and attention to the world, myself, and my relationships.

Lent begins with the making of a small dusty cross on my head, the hard case that protects the organ that makes decisions. The season starts by asking me to imagine how life might be if the imprint of Christ's courageous compassion made itself felt and acted on rather than just passionately talked about.

Lent knows what we are like. It has seen the painting. It has read a bit of Freud, some history books, political manifestos, and memoirs of hurt and achievement. It winces at our cyclical, self-destructive repetitions. It believes in us, though, knowing that, with God and each other, if we reach outside our own hardened little worlds, we set the scene to be helped and, maybe, even changed. That would be good — for me and those who live with me.

In the Gospels, the 40 days that Jesus spent in the beguiling wilderness immediately followed his baptism. Coming up out of the water, he had heard the unmistakable voice that matters, telling him he was cherished, wanted, and ready. He then goes into the heat, spending time with himself, hearing other voices that want him to live down to them; but he knows that his vocation can be lived only when he learns to live up to the one voice that he heard that day in the river, not down to the ones that want him to live some indifferent and submerged existence as a consumer of the world and not as a citizen of the Kingdom.

We follow him. Where he goes, so do we. A wilderness Lent is needed more than ever to do some heart-repair and start becoming Christians again. I don't know who owns the Bruegel painting. What I do know is that its themes belong to all of us; our inner landscape matches his rowdy town square. As long as the fight continues, the soul will be alive.

Canon Mark Oakley is Dean of St John's College, Cambridge

How Sunday became a Christian day of rest

It was 1700 years ago, on 7th March 321, that the Roman Emperor Constantine I (Constantine the Great), who had converted to Christianity, decreed that Sunday should be a day of rest throughout the Empire.

This was a change from normal Roman Empire practice, which was to regard Sunday as just another work-day – something the UK seems to be reverting to. But Constantine's civil decree made Sunday a day of rest from labour. It said: "All judges and city people and craftsmen shall rest upon the venerable day of the sun."

This was not intended to replace the Jewish Sabbath, which starts at sunset on Friday and continues to sunset on Saturday. Such Jewish observance was regarded by most Christians as being bound to the old law instead of the Spirit, and so was resisted. Christians backed the Sunday rest because it was the day on which Jesus had risen from the dead and the Holy Spirit had come – despite possible doubts about the phrase "day of the sun".

Christians meeting for worship on Sunday in fact dates back to the Acts of the Apostles, and it is mentioned historically about 115AD. Actual practice varies across the world and through the years.

Stay trimmed and balanced

'Do not let this Book... depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night...

be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be... successful.' (Joshua 1.8)

Any flying instructor will tell you that aeroplanes need to be 'trimmed' or 'balanced in flight' on a regular basis. After flying through storms and hitting air pockets, they get knocked out of line. That's true of our path through life. The bad storms of sickness, redundancy, divorce and disappointment, can knock us off our balance, too.

In other words, our attitude needs to be constantly checked and adjusted. Have you checked yours lately? What are you encountering at the moment that is putting pressure on you to veer off course? So long as we live, we will always need to look to God, to stay 'trimmed and balanced'. Lent is an excellent time to do this.

The best way to stay balanced is to read God's Word. It gives us a true map of the world around us, and it shows us where we are on that map. Here's an idea you can try for Lent: every week, for the next few weeks, choose a Bible verse and write it down on a small card. Carry it with you wherever you go and memorise it. In one year, you'll know 52 new scriptures, and more importantly, your attitudes will be more naturally in line with God's Word, your faith will be strengthened, and your life will be moving in the right direction.

‘Zoomed Out?’

You’re still on mute!’ If you’ve used Zoom over the past year, you’ll be familiar with this cry! After a day on Zoom, the last thing we often want to do is using it for a chat with friends or a church service on Sunday! Now this reveals a wider problem that we face. We know that staying connected in the pandemic is hard. When we’re tired and busy, it’s easy to stop connecting with others, which would encourage our faith or wellbeing. This might also include not sending a text, Facebook comment or phoning somebody up.

Remember what Paul says: ‘For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.’ (Romans 7:15). It’s often easier to avoid connecting with God and others, when this would be good for our sense of value, purpose and identity. Certain patterns of behaviour can make us feel safer, but in reality they prevent us from living our lives fully as God intends.

Paul adds: ‘What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!’ (Romans 7:24,25). Through the death and resurrection of Jesus we have the freedom to act differently. Lent is an ideal time to develop new habits, especially when we are tired or anxious. It may involve spending less time on Facebook, turning the TV off to call a friend who we need to catch up with, or getting up a bit earlier to spend time in Bible reading and prayer. Let’s keep reminding ourselves that ‘God is bigger than Zoom’ and make sure that we don’t get disconnected!

Let’s be committed to doing the right thing, rather than simply the easier thing.

JESUS

*If I could package faith into one parcel
And collect all hope into a single can –
If I could roll all love into one heart-ball
And commoditise it in a living man
I’d already have a fully detailed label
Prepared before the world itself began –
And it would have one name –
And that name – JESUS –
At the centre of God’s universal plan
To take the world along the course
God’s surge of love provoked
Till wholeness flows through everything
With God’s Spirit of life unyoked.*

Sam Doubtfire



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Walk and pray for your community in 2021



Our communities have all been being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic: our schools, hospitals, neighbours, churches, friends and families, so when we're out on our daily walk, let's turn the time to prayer. That's the challenge from HOPE Together, which is encouraging Christians to walk and pray in 2021.

Rachel Jordan-Wolf, HOPE's executive director, says: 'Whatever time, wherever you live, whilst we're able and permitted to walk – let's walk and talk to the one who has the power to act and bring change.'

HOPE is bringing together resources and ideas for prayer walking from many UK prayer ministries. An app is also being developed to track where Christians have walked and prayed throughout the UK. This is part of a worldwide Every Home for Christ initiative called Oikos, which aims to take the Christian message of hope to every home on the planet over the next 20 years. To find out more visit www.hopetogether.org.uk/prayerwalk21

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ALL SAINTS CRAFT GROUP

The Craft Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 2.30pm in the Church Meeting Room. We learn new skills and practise old ones. Tea/coffee, biscuits and good company are always on offer. **Please join us when meetings begin again.**

All are welcome. For further details please contact Frances Pickett on 0161 439 8890.



All Saints' Website and Facebook



Keep up to date with news and events on the All Saints' website. Find out about our charity work, community groups and listen to recent sermons.



Please contact Sarah Ball on: comms@allsaintsheadleholme.org.uk with any stories and updates.

Find All Saints' on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsCH/> and "Like" us to get notifications about our news and events.



Church Open

**Saturday Coffee Mornings have been postponed
for the immediate future.**



MEN'S SOCIETY

Monthly meetings on the first Thursday, September to May, at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room (unless otherwise stated). After the talk there is a short question and answer session followed by tea, coffee and biscuits.

Due to the implementation of measures to combat the Coronavirus pandemic all meetings have been cancelled. Further details will be posted when available.

Although this group is attended by men, if you are interested in hearing any of the speakers you will be most welcome to come along.

Chairman: Bradley Torbitt (0161 486 9387)

Secretary: Mike Parry (0161 485 7886)

Let's clap for mothers!

As Mother's Day approaches, let's hear it for all the mothers who have been on the frontline of helping our country survive the Covid pandemic!

Just as we've clapped on our doorsteps for the NHS and other heroes, let's applaud all that mothers have done – often balancing home and employment – during these long lockdown months.

Research shows that mums have carried out most of the home schooling and household tasks – with many also holding down important frontline roles in the NHS and other essential services. Women spent more than twice as much time as men on their children's home schooling and development during the lockdown, according to a study by University College London. It measured how parents responded while schools and nurseries were closed to most families.

The survey, reported by the Guardian newspaper, found that women across several age groups took the major share of childcare and home schooling. Those with primary school-aged children “were considerably more likely” to have given up working than fathers with children of the same age.

The pressure on families was further increased as many grandparents and other carers were unable to help. Family and friendship networks were put under strain with contacts restricted to online Zoom or Facetime calls that are often difficult with younger children. Launching a Children's Society report into children's welfare during the lockdown, chief executive Mark Russell said: “We are living in unprecedented times. Months of national lockdown, only small numbers of children in school, and many families experiencing real crisis. Coronavirus has impacted every area of our lives and The Children's Society has been deeply concerned about the impact of this crisis on children, especially the most disadvantaged. Our survey found a higher proportion of young people experiencing low well-being than we are used to seeing. Whilst we know that most children's well-being will ‘bounce-back’, there will be some who do not.”

Mothers are at the frontline of helping our children cope with – and then recover from – the effects of the Covid pandemic and the extended lockdowns. Many working mothers lost their jobs because of the pandemic, and families will be hard-pressed to make up the income lost. Food bank provider, the Trussell Trust has warned churches to prepare for a ‘tidal wave’ of poverty and to be ready to help their local communities.

This Mother's Day, daffodils and chocolate may seem very thin reward for the major contribution of mums across our nation. In normal times, they have a challenging and demanding job to do. Through the pandemic, they have risen to the challenges and sought to ensure children thrive despite the lockdowns.

As we celebrate Mother's Day, let's recognise the amazing efforts made by mothers in the home with their children. Let's also celebrate the vital roles many also play – as do those without children – in the NHS, in education, in the government and civil service, in keeping vital supplies flowing – and in our pulpits and across our churches.



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Jesus and His mother

When Jesus was at a Galilean wedding (John 2:1-11), He was there with His disciples and Mary, His mum. During the celebrations, unknown to the groom, the wine ran out. Mary was quick to spot the problem. She knew this could be an embarrassing moment for the groom if people couldn't have a drink, and the married couple would face ridicule and shame. So, Mary asked her Son for help. Although we know that Jesus responded by turning water into wine, she didn't know this was going to happen. At that time Jesus had not performed a miracle! Whatever she thought, Mary simply showed concern and trusted Jesus to do the right thing.

At first Jesus seems to respond to His mum with a rebuke. This dilemma was not His concern. Even so, Mary says to the servants "Do whatever He tells you."

Jesus instructs the servants to fill six large stone jars with water. A sample is taken, and it has become the best wine to conclude the festivities. Jesus had met a human need and prevented a ruined wedding day.



The servants obeyed Jesus and a miracle followed. Later, through His ministry, many people obeyed Jesus and their response brought healing or some other beneficial change.

In this story, only Mary, the servants and the disciples were aware of this miracle. It was not a public spectacle such as Jesus feeding 5000 people with a handful of bread and fish. We too should be alert to what God is doing amongst us while others are oblivious of a divine hand. "Do whatever He tells you" Mary said.

What wise words! When we do this our lives will be transformed. It took a mother to know the right thing to say in a troubled situation. Mary knew Jesus would not let her down. So must we.





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Our building is closed. We are still worshipping.

It has been lovely this week to hear of the many ways our congregation have been worshipping together but apart using our service. I know it is a HUGE change from what we are used to and it can feel strange getting in to a new groove of prayer and worship. Thank you for your understanding. Please be assured of my prayers for you and the church.

We understand that for many this lockdown is a difficult situation. If you would like prayers or simply a conversation please contact me - Rev Sarah on 0161 485 3455 or vicar@allsaintsheadleholme.org.uk or our Churchwardens Janet Ashman 0161 485 7969 and John Ackerley 0161 486 1419.

Stay safe and God bless
Rev Sarah Hancock

*"The Annunciation"
circa 1150
From a Swabian Gospel
manuscript housed at
Württembergische
Landesbibliothek
(State Library of
Württemberg), Stuttgart,
Germany.*





Christian Stewardship

The Parish practises the principles of Christian Stewardship in its giving for the work of God. If you are interested to learn more about it please contact the Recorder, Kate Hughes (485 1010), the Vicar or the Churchwardens. The giving of time and talents is encouraged, If you wish to help in some capacity in the Church services or organisations, in improving or maintaining the Church fabric or grounds, or in visiting and helping the sick or housebound, please speak to the Clergy or the Churchwardens.



All Saints Cheadle Hulme

PARISH DIRECTORY

Clergy: *The Rev'd Sarah Hancock, All Saints Vicarage, 27 Church Road SK8 7JL (485 3455)
The Rev'd Janet Owens (Retired) (312 4683)

Readers: Mrs Pat Yates (485 4546)
Mr Michael Aiers (439 7692)

Church Wardens: *Mrs Janet Ashman (485 7969)
*Mr John Ackerley (486 1419)

Deputy Wardens: *Mrs Julia Ball (440 8647)
*Ms Sarah Ball (07966 146746)

Organist: Miss Trevlyn Thomas (485 8026)

Sacristan: *Mrs Janet Valentine (439 8203)

P.C.C. Vice Chairman and Treasurer: *Mr Jeremy Valentine (439 8203)

P.C.C. Secretary: *Mrs Linda Ackerley (486 1419)

Planned Giving and Gift Aid Secretary: *Mrs Kate Hughes (485 1010)

Mainly Music Co-ordinator and Child Protection Officer: *Mrs Clare Russell (486 9304)

Church Room Bookings: Mr Neville Ashman (485 7969)

Parish Rooms Bookings: Ms Joanna Parsons, Parish Room Cottage, Church Road, SK8 7JB
(485 2596)

Electoral Roll Officer: Dr David Jones (01625 850997)

Parish Magazine Editor: Mr Rhys Davenport (485 6772) Email: seed.design@mail.com

Website and Social Media: *Ms Sarah Ball Email: comms@allsaintsheadleulme.org.uk

Parish Magazine Secretary and Treasurer:
Mrs Chris Spencer (485 8282)

Deanery Synod Representatives: *Mrs Julia Ball (440 8647)

*Miss Irene Walton (439 6096)

P.C.C. Members are marked* Other members

Mesdames: L. Bacon, M. Epps, C. Jones, L. Karuku, F. Pickett, S. Stone