

Saints ALIVE

*The magazine of:
All Saints, Leighton Buzzard
St. Nicholas, Hockliffe
St. Michael's, Eggington
St. Michael and All Angels,
Billington
The Good Shepherd, Sandhills*

October 2023

70p

Inside:

Congratulations to Mr Heather on his ordination to the priesthood.

Celebrating Charitable Giving at All Saints year round, with 3 appeals for Harvest and the autumn

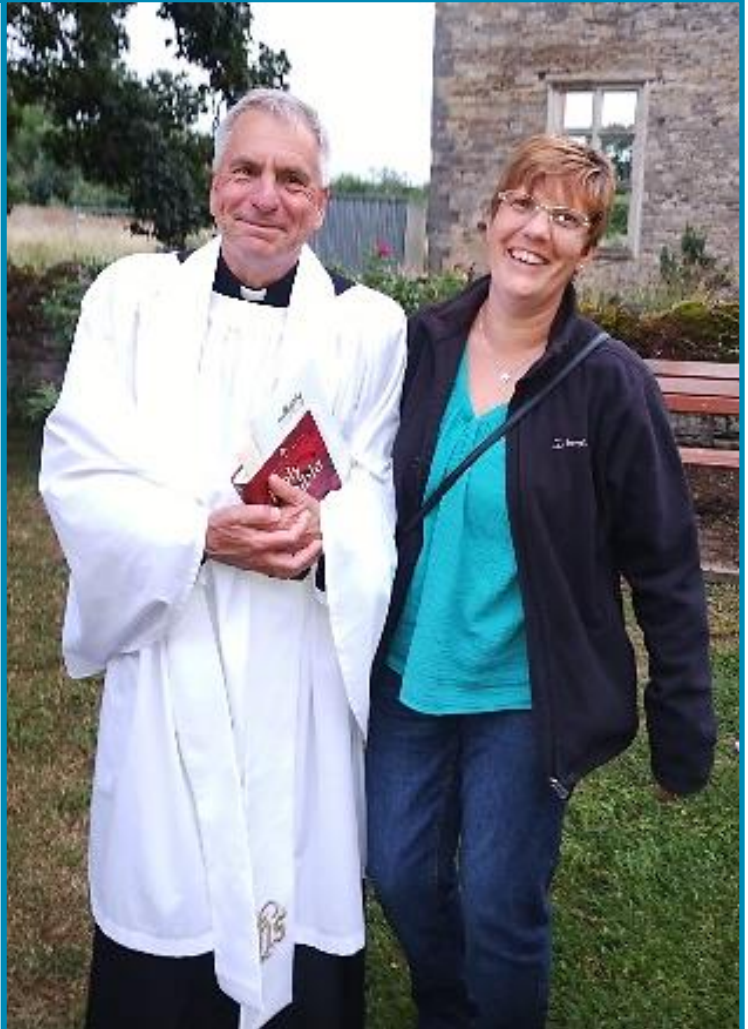
Smells & Bells – why we use them

Fr. Noel discusses Loneliness

And news, views from the villages

PLUS

LOTS of events to look forward to at Eggington



All Saints Leighton Buzzard

Team Rector & Vicar of All Saints:

In Vacancy

The Vicarage,
Pulford Road, LU7 1AB 01525 373217

Curate:

Rev'd Kirsty Borthwick 07865 748966

Team Vicars:

Rev'd Noel McGeeney 01525 237633

Rev'd Dr. Bernard Minton 01525 372149

Rev'd Steve Marsh 01525 838450

Associate Priests:

Canon Malcolm Grant 01525 372771

Canon Don Brewin 01525 373644

Canon Grant Fellows 01525 381418

Diocesan Readers

Roger Collor 01525 376430

Geoffrey Huskisson 01525 757013

Geoffrey Marchant 01525 371797

Linda Morris 07943 053793

Laurelin Burge 01525 371849

Katharine Reedy 07932 359815

Frank Reedy 07777 659128

Churchwardens

Sam Smith 07414 620754

Bill Webb 01525 383356

John Sykes 01525 852218

PCC Secretary

Judith Lakin pcsecretary@allsaintslb.org.uk

All Saints Parish Office

All Saints Church, Church Square,
Leighton Buzzard LU7 1AE
Open Tuesday - Friday 9.30am - 2.30pm
Tel: 01525 381418

Website: www.allsaintslb.org.uk
Email: parish@allsaintslb.org.uk
Facebook: All Saints Leighton Buzzard

Office Manager & Vicar's PA 01525 381418
Jo Waller

Head Verger
Lindsay Bevis 01525 381418

Director of Music & Choir Master
including Leighton Young Singers Club
Paul Dickens 01525 210210

Free Will Offering Scheme
Mark Jeeves treasurer@allsaintslb.org.uk

Sunday Saints Co-ordinator
Alison Dobbie 01525 759259

Mothers' Union Branch Co-ordinator
Janet Wenborn 01525 370987

Tower Liaison
Margaret Birtles 07949 141211
Kevin Pughe 07402 233022
Barry Eglesfield 07967 755148

Toddler Time
Julie Dolton 07954 148128

All Saints Preservation Trust
30, High St, Leighton Buzzard LU7 1EA
E-mail: enquiry@allsaintspreservationtrust.org
Website: www.allsaintspreservationtrust.org

Saints ALIVE: Items for publication to the Editors: Jo Waller & Julia Dickens, preferably by e-mail magazine@allsaintslb.org.uk

Advertising: Please contact magazineadvertising@allsaintslb.org.uk

Distribution: Stephen Jury 01525 381936; stephenljury21@btinternet.com

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Loneliness

By Rev'd Noel McGeeney

Where does it come from? It is part of the human condition and so it is natural to feel lonely. Like all our emotions, at our best, we learn to channel them for our well-being. Because feelings of loneliness are painful, difficult to face and challenging to deal with, there is a real temptation to suppress them or medicate them one way or another.

Indeed there are endless ways in today's world to distract us from sitting with any or all of our painful feelings.

My starting point is that because feelings of loneliness are natural and normal to us, then we can appreciate them as a gift and use them for our well-being. Loneliness is designed to nudge us out of selfishness to otherness. It drives us into relationships and enlarges our hearts to love. Without it we would never marry, engage in friendships or endure the numerous problems that are natural part of intimacy.

There are three relationships we navigate throughout our lives, the relationship with our inner self, where we cultivate an interior life; the relationship with others where we cultivate values of respect, kindness, tolerance and patience! The relationship with God where we cultivate our sense of wonder and mystery, all blended to integrate loneliness throughout our lives.

The relationship with our inner self

All our emotions, our unconscious and our dreams are for our instruction, to assist our human development. The goal of life is to be human in an inhuman world. Being rooted in principles and values that underpin all our choices. When I was 13, I joined the scouts and memorised the Scout Law: to be loyal, trustworthy, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, pure, God's glory in mind. These values are a sure antidote to loneliness.

The relationship with others

Being secure in my own identity, I can value the gifts and talents of others without any sense of having to compete or compare myself. As I accept the mystery of who I am, I can be fascinated by the mystery of others. This kind of formation is an antidote to the temptation to use others to fill my loneliness.

The relationship with God

You don't have to believe in God to live a moral life. All world religions have mercy and compassion as attributes of God. Jesus states that Love is the core attribute of God. As the saying goes, 'love and do as you will'. Jesus' description of the Holy Spirit is the comforter. At times of our greatest sense of isolation and loneliness, the Comforter is with us. The Comforter is the real antidote to loneliness, giving a peace that the world cannot give.

Shalom.

Fr. Noel McGeeney

Our present pattern of services across the Ouzel Valley Team

All Saints

Sundays:

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Eucharist

11.30am (usual pattern but can vary occasionally)

1st Sunday: Messy Mass

3rd Sunday: All Age Service

2nd & 4th Sunday: Holy Baptism

6pm Evening Prayer

1st Sunday: Choral Evensong Plus

3rd Sunday: Sung with hymns

(NO choir) followed by Benediction

2nd & 4th Sunday: Said Evensong

Weekdays:

Holy Communion

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3rd Tuesday)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

St. Barnabas, Linslade

Sundays:

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

www.stbarnabaslinslade.uk

St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach

Sundays:

8am: Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion (in church & via Zoom)

1st Sundays: Family Service

Tuesdays: 7pm Holy Communion

Morning Prayer via Zoom:

9.00am Monday - Saturday

www.saintleonardschurch.com

St. Michael's, Eggington

9.30am 1st & 3rd Sundays: Holy Communion

St. Nicholas', Hockliffe

9.30am 2nd Sundays: Family Communion

4th Sundays: Holy Communion

St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington

11.15am Holy Communion

Good Shepherd, Astral Park Sports & Community Centre, Johnson Drive, Sandhills, LU7 4AY:

Sundays at 9.45am:

1st Sunday: Holy Communion & CGS Juniors

2nd Sunday: 'In the Community', at Astral Park

3rd Sunday: Family Service

4th Sunday: Bring and share breakfast and Holy Communion

Free pop-up café every Sunday from 9.45am

Sunday Saints: for age 3+ year olds, meets during 9.30am Sunday service at All Saints.

All Saints Toddler Time: All Saints every Wednesday during term time, at 9.30am & at 1.30pm. £1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included.

Leighton Young Singers Club: for children in Years 2-6, meets on Fridays at 6.30 - 7.30pm.

Bereavement Café: a support group offering friendship and understanding.

1st Sunday of the month, 2.30-4pm The Spire Coffee Shop, All Saints

Choir Practice: Friday evenings, 6.45 trebles; 7.30 adults.

Bellringers: Practice on Monday, 7.30 - 9.30pm.

Spire Coffee Shop: Tuesday, Friday & Saturday 10am - 2pm.

Contact Details on Page 2.

News Roundup

A message from the Team Clergy:

As most of you will know, Mother Cate, Team Rector and Vicar of All Saints, left not long ago, and All Saints is now in a vacancy while we look to appoint someone new. The Team Council has decided to advertise for a Team Vicar for All Saints, rather than a Team Rector, in order to hopefully widen the pool of potential applicants, and to relieve some pressure on whoever is appointed. Fr Bernard will be acting Rector for the time being, and once a new appointment is made for All Saints, the Team clergy will discuss allocating our responsibilities to best suit our collective abilities and inclinations. There are no changes planned to our existing arrangements or to current parish routines, which remain the responsibility of individual Team Vicars and PCCs.



Worth a smile

Those Church Bulletin notes that didn't quite work as intended:

- ❖ The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.
- ❖ The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'
- ❖ Ladies, don't forget the jumble sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- ❖ Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community.
- ❖ Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.
- ❖ Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.
- ❖ Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- ❖ At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- ❖ Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.
- ❖ The senior choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.
- ❖ Please join us as we show our support for Amy and Alan in preparing for the girth of their first child.
- ❖ For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.



A pastor giving a children's sermon on vestments asked: "Why do you think I wear this collar?"

One kid answered: "Because it kills ticks and fleas up to 30 days?"

Parish Registers

Holy Matrimony, August:

5: Samuel Smith & Gemma Dolton at All Saints;
26: Frederick Roche & Natasha Hart at St. Michael's

'Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate'

Holy Baptism, August:

19: Alfie James Culham; 27: Carter Denny Yardley, Teddy Andrew Jude Grocott, Beau Sidney John Birdsey, Luna-Grace Page Barker, Aurora-Rose Amelia Barker, Sebastian George Richard Barker, Phoenix Jake Uhtred Barker, Curtis Neil James Gulwell, Riah Jade Barker

'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'

R.I.P. August:

1: David Gray at All Saints; 8: Marilyn Coleman at St. Nicholas; 10: Michael Myers at Crownhill; 21: Alan Scott at St. Barnabas; 31: Frances Maclennan at Bierton

'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die'

Years Mind, October:

1: Vera Delafield, Arthur Waldock, Henry (Topper) Baines, Diana Reynolds; 2: Walter Sandifer, Paul Kaye, John Dry; 4: Sybil Lawson; 5: Jim Aris, Rita Styles, John Sandifer; 6: Winifred Hart; 7: Laurence Nash, Anne Gittins, Edna Forward; 9: Francis Williams, Hilda Plenderleath, William Delafield; 10: Sheila Twivy; 13: William Sutton, Rosemary Wells; 14: Gilbert Inglefield, Harry Tingey, Emma Smith; 17: Doris Wells, George Simmonds; 19: Hugh Harmer, Marjorie Duff, Adelaide Lack, Joan Lawrie; 20: Pat Harris, Andrew Craddock, Donald Butler, Eric Underwood; 21: John Skinner; 22: Harold Rolls, Wally Fountaine; 26: Grace Nash, Frank Pateman; 30: Helen Lau



LEIGHTON BUZZARD MUSIC

2 LIVE PROFESSIONAL CONCERTS in October 2023

Leighton Buzzard Library Theatre, Lake St, LB. LU7 1RX

14th October at 7.30pm

Rosamunde Trio

Martino Tirimo piano; Ben Sayevich violin & Daniel Veis cello will play Beethoven, Shostakovich, & Smetana



28th October also at 7.30pm

Madeleine Pickering

Young violinist with a varied programme;
winner of the prestigious Making Music
Philip & Dorothy Green Award for Young Concert Artists



Please note: Book via TicketSource or at the door, www.lbmusic.co.uk

Leighton Buzzard Music is a registered charity no: 1183681

Pulford VA Lower School

Head Teacher: Rev'd Dave Heather, MBE

Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick

Tel: 01525 372188

Website: www.pulfordschool.org

A church school for
a whole community



Pulford School is the oldest in Leighton Buzzard. It is named after Joshua Pulford, Vicar of the town who died in 1710 leaving provision in his will for education. For possibly the first time in its history, it now has a member of the clergy as headmaster. Mr Heather was ordained as a priest on 30th June at Elstow Abbey with three other curates.

Elstow Abbey was a monastery for Benedictine nuns in Elstow, Bedfordshire. Only part of the original abbey still stands.

This was (possibly) the first time that there has been a Church of England ordination at Elstow Abbey. Rt. Rev'd Richard Atkinson, Bishop of Bedford, led the service.

Mr Heather is to be curate of the three parishes of Studham, Kensworth and Whipsnade as well as being Headmaster at Pulford School. He celebrated communion for the first time at Studham church on 2nd July.

Tessa Rees.

[What a great day. Many, many congratulations to Mr. Heather. Ed]





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email: eileennaples50@outlook.com

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electrical items.
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Memorial.*



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On a musical note.....



The 11.15 band does it differently



When I was a child, we had a print of a painting by Margaret Tarrant framed in our hallway which quoted Psalm 150: 'Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.' We are called to worship God with music and song in whatever way we can. According to the earlier verses of Psalm 150, we should, 'Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet...the strings and pipe...the clash of symbols.'

While the 9.30 service has the choir and the organ to aid the worship, the 11.30 service takes a different approach, with the band and the piano helping to lead the singing, putting into practice those very words from the psalm. It's even better when the congregation get involved too, God not being concerned with the tunefulness of the singing as much as the sentiment behind it.

I have been playing the clarinet for the band for the last seven years, occasionally filling in for Paul on the piano. We are a small band, consisting of recorder, clarinet and violin but we do our best to praise the Lord through our music. The violinist in question is my daughter, now aged twelve. She first started in the band as a small five year-old who only knew eight notes. She is now a pretty competent player with Grade 5 under her belt.

The age range of the 11.30 service tends to be on the young side so the way we praise the Lord is with action songs, those with a repeated and easy to memorise chorus and of course with the procession at the end, where everyone gets a chance to play an instrument of their own and 'praise him with resounding cymbals'! We are beginning to add in some new songs which are mostly easy to get to grips with and in some cases known by children who attend Pulford School. We are open to suggestions, particularly those which work well with the noisy instruments at the end of the service.

We are always looking to expand our band membership, so if you have an instrument which has perhaps been gathering dust in a corner, now is the time to clean it off and bring it along. We play at two services a month and usually have a quick rehearsal before the service. You don't need to be a professional player, just have enough notes and enthusiasm to give it a go.

Claire Vogeli

Calendar of Events

1st October

Harvest Festival

Services as usual including Messy Mass All Saints 11.30am

Choral Evensong Plus Ploughman's Supper All Saints 6pm



Bereavement Support Café

Coffee Shop, All Saints 2.30pm – 4pm



4th October

Lunch Club in the North Transept, All Saints 1pm.

Tickets £5.00 available from the Coffee Shop.



7th October

Public meeting on Renewable Energy, All Saints 10.00am – 11.30am.

Come and hear from experts about the Renewable Energy challenges in our town and nationally.

Organised in partnership with local Friends of the Earth.



7th October

Congo Church Association AGM, in the Samaritan Room 12 noon.

Followed by BYO lunch and at 2pm, a talk by David Williams, Bishop of Basingstoke, recently returned from DR Congo. A chance to hear first-hand his experience of some of the challenges of ministry in this war-torn region where Christians provide hope and support for so many living on the front line. All are welcome.



15th October

Services as usual including

All Age Communion All Saints 11.30am

20th October

Crafty Natter All Saints 1.30pm



27th - 28th October

Arts Festival All Saints 10.00am - 5.00pm

Harvest Appeals



This year's Harvest Appeal supports **Mission Direct** in their work in Kumi, **Uganda**, by providing materially poor families with chickens. These give them a sustainable and low cost food source, and also provides them with a new income stream because they can sell some of their eggs and new chicks that hatch.

Their first hatchlings are returned to the project so that another family can benefit. Depending on how much money is raised, some funds might also support other food poverty projects, like planting orchards for schools to supplement the diets of their pupils.

You can support the Bishop's Harvest Appeal by submitting your donation via the open plate collections at any of the Harvest services on Sunday 1st October, or to the Parish Office in an envelope marked Harvest Appeal. Thank you.

Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal

You are invited to participate in Link to Hope's 2023 shoebox appeal, a simple idea that brings smiles to the poorest people in Eastern Europe. It is a way to show consideration and love to those far away in war-torn or poverty-stricken circumstances, regardless of their background, colour, creed or religion.

Leaflets with all the details and instructions are available from the PIM noticeboard in the north transept. Boxes need to be returned to the parish office by 31st October at the latest.

Link to Hope

FAMILY & ELDERLY SHOEBOX APPEAL

- Romania
- Moldova
- Ukraine
- Bulgaria

JOIN US
HELP US, HELP THEM

Before the **31st October** – please return to Parish Office
www.linktohope.co.uk



on ...

Groups and activities, sustaining the Christian community of The Ouzel Valley Team

Partners in Mission (PIM) was formed as a sub-committee of the PCC to direct the discussion on All Saints charitable giving separately from the PCC meeting. This enables more time to be spent looking into the many charities that send information to us asking for financial help. This month we received eight request letters, copies of which are displayed in the box on the PIM board in the north transept.

Reflecting the congregation's concern for God's world, PIM supports relief efforts in disaster and conflict zones, and maintains long-term relationships with local, national, and international charities that have a Christian ethic.



**Above: Hope and Aid Direct - Ukraine project, including portable gas stoves;
Below: Christian Aid - East Africa Hunger Crisis.**



In the last year, we have supported: Hope and Aid Direct in their work in Ukraine, Barnardo's, Christian Aid appeal for East Africa, Christians Against Poverty, Kids Out, World Vision appeal for the Turkey/Syria Earthquake, CORD (enabling indigenous communities in South East Asia), Freddie and Friends, and Leighton Linslade Helpers with a food collection: and on behalf of the Sunday School we have been sponsoring Sam Ang in Cambodia since 2015 (World Vision Child Sponsorship).

This Harvest, we shall be supporting the Bishop's Harvest Appeal – Cracking Food Poverty Together in Uganda, as well as providing a collection point for unwanted work tools on behalf of WorkAid.

Members of the congregation sometimes have a particular interest in a geographical region, organisation, or initiative, and we are always keen to support that. A good example of this is the current shoebox appeal. More details about this can be found on the PIM notice-board, and on Pages 11 & 14 of this magazine.

Partners in Mission & All Saints' Charitable Giving

All Saints is involved with many other initiatives such as Christian Aid Week, and the Fairtrade Places of Worship Scheme. Also, if you have ever visited the All Saints' toilets, you may have noticed that they are twinned with others in Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of Congo! In past years, we hosted many popular social events, which had the dual benefit of raising funds for a named organisation and fostering important church fellowship.

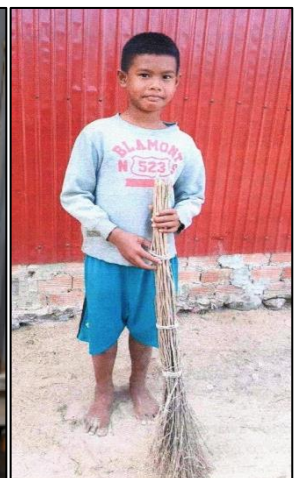
Since the pandemic, several of our dedicated and experienced members have retired from the group and we are much in need of new members who would like to get involved.

James Legg on behalf of PIM



The scale of need –

Clockwise from top right: CORD – enabling indigenous communities in South East Asia; Sam Ang, in Cambodia, sponsored on behalf of Sunday School (World Vision Child Sponsorship); A lorry taking supplies to the Turkey/Syrian Earthquake region (World Vision Appeal); The devastation caused by that earthquake.



TOOL HARVEST AT ALL SAINTS

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SUNDAY 1st TO SATURDAY 7th OCTOBER**

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Below are examples of items we are able to accept. For a full list of accepted items please visit workaid.org/donatetools.

Tools:

saws, routers, planes, tape measures, levels, angle grinders, hand drills, adjustable spanners, lathes, clamps and hacksaws

Sewing Machines:

antique & vintage, manual, treadle and overlockers

Knitting Machines:

manual and electric

Haberdashery:

dress making fabric, thread, scissors, pins & needles, elastic, zips, buttons and wool

Horticulture:

spades, forks, lawnmowers, hedge trimmers even watering cans



We ask that all items are in good and serviceable condition.

St. Nicholas, Hockliffe

Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney

Tel: 01525 237633

Churchwardens:

Brian Speller: 210565;

Roger Spalding: 07415 877501



Since the Renaissance period (AD 1400 – 1600) Christians have looked to plants and flowers as an aid to contemplation and prayer. Many flowers have retained their religious significance and are still very popular today.



A red rose signifies the blood of Christ and white roses the charity and chastity of the Virgin Mary; lilies are also associated with Mary; pinks (Dianthus) signify the nails used in the Crucifixion; irises are associated with the Passion of Christ; heartsease is linked to the Holy Trinity.

It would be unusual to find a church without any flowers and many people give of their time and talents to care for the flowers in churches everywhere.

On August Bank Holiday weekend, St Nicholas Church Hockliffe was an incredible cornucopia of blossoms. Never has the church looked so splendid.

The event, St Nicholas Flower Festival, was coordinated by Carol Speller and her team. Arrangements were made by individuals and groups from all over The Ouzel Valley area.

The theme of the festival was 'Poetry and Rhyme'. From the simplicity of "a rose by another name" to the arrangement around the fireplace incredible creativity and talent was shown by the exhibitors.

On the basis that a "picture is worth a thousand words", I am grateful to Father Noel for allowing me to use his photographs in this article.



Sunday 8th October St Nicholas will be holding our Harvest Service at 9.30am. Followed by Harvest Lunch at 12 noon in the church. Everybody is welcome to either or both.

Roger Spalding

St. Michael & All Angels, Billington

Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh

Tel: 01525 838450

Churchwardens:

Sandra Brewin 373644; Julia Haviland 850380



When the world seems to be full of dark, tragic and gut-wrenching news, it is encouraging and heartwarming to spot tiny beacons of light bringing joy and hope to those who can see them.

For several years now the congregation of St Michael and All Angels have been supporting a small charity in Uganda called TDT, the Teso Development Trust. Teso is an area in Uganda which has suffered from drought, floods and invasions by militia groups including the Lord's Resistance Army. Through receiving small grants from TDT in conjunction with the Pentecostal Church in Uganda, members of the community have been able to set up various enterprises including building wells, providing beehives, chicken farming and horticulture. The small incomes which participants receive enables them to pay school fees for their children while feeding them a healthy diet. If you would like to know more about TDT do contact me.



The other beacon which shone for us in Billington was the Cream Tea which was held on 16th September. Over 50 people including children came up to the church and sat outside in the glorious sunshine. Like in "The Tiger who came to Tea" all the scones, shortbread, cakes, tea and coffee were consumed, and everybody enjoyed meeting up for the afternoon.

Thanks to Jean Albertella, Julia Haviland and Tina and David Thompson for all the work they put in to make the afternoon such a success and thank you so much to all those who came.

Harvest Festival Service will be at 11.15 am on Sunday 2nd October. It will be followed by a Ploughman's Lunch at 1pm. All are welcome to both or either.

Sandra Brewin



St. Michael's, Eggington

Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney

Tel: 01525 237633

Church Officers:

Carol Hart 384634; Paul Brown 751861



There is a lot happening here at St Michael's during October.



1st October: We start with our **Harvest Festival**. We will be asking for donations of dry goods, instead of fresh produce, so that they can be given to Leighton-Linslade Helpers for their food bank. The collection on the day will be in aid of the Bishop's Uganda appeal.



4th October: the usual monthly Wednesday morning "Elevenesses" in the church when anyone can come and have a cuppa and a chat.



7th October: We will be having one of our very popular **Quiz Evenings** when Andy will be trying, and no doubt succeeding, in beating our memories with his questions! The cost is £8 per person, which includes a ploughman's supper, and teams of max 6 people. You will need to bring your own drinks and glasses.

If you are interested in coming and enjoying a fun evening, please contact Angela Dyer on LB.210420 to book your place. Places are limited so booking is essential.



21st October: our gallant band **Churchyard Workers** will meet at 10.30am, attempting to keep the weeds under control! A great help to our gallant band has been having the height of the hedge considerably reduced making it easier for us to keep it trimmed. What has also helped is having the Community Payback Team coming one morning a month to help. If you would like to come and join us for a bit of fresh air, good company, a chat and a bit of light work, you will be most welcome, and we do have refreshments.

Service Date Swap: As **Bishop Alan** is due to be visiting us on 22nd, and as this is not our regular service day, we have swapped with St Nicholas Hockliffe. Therefore they will have a service on 15th October, so that we can have one on the 22nd. Our service will start as usual at 9.30am.

22nd October: The Cafe Church, which is designed for families who have had a child baptised within the last couple of years, will meet in Eggington village hall at 3.00pm.

26th October: A Social Buffet Evening for all the villages at the Eggington Curry Garden starting at 6.30 for 7.00pm. The cost will be £20. Please 'phone Stephen Sheppard on 07815 325949 to book your place.

What an exciting month we have to look forward to in Eggington. Hope you can come and join us at some or all of these events.

Paul Brown



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Bike 'n Hike – a big thank you

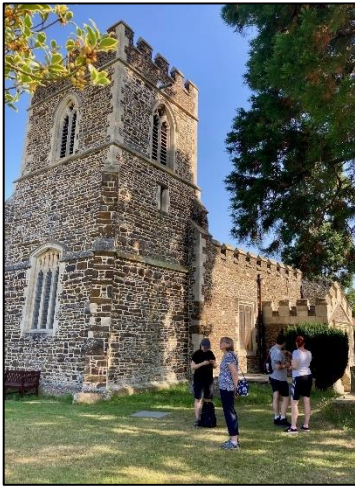


All Saints had two groups for the Bike 'n Hike this year. Brian and Maggie visited 8 churches and walked 3 miles while Katrina, Mother Kirsty, Abby & Chris, Emma & Steve, and Dorothy covered 12 miles and visited 10 churches.

Walking in company with others is enjoyable and we made sure to keep hydrated by stopping for drinks, keeping to shaded woodland paths where possible and relaxing over a pub lunch. Thank you to all our sponsors who have been very generous.

We don't quite have the final total but reckon on having raised £1,200. This means £600 goes to All Saints, since the funds are split evenly with the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust, and we will look forward to receiving a Silver Certificate. We look forward to next year's event which will be Brian Bainbridge's 10th Bike 'n Hike.

***Katrina Grant,
on behalf Team All Saints***



Photos:

Top: Brian and Maggie stop off at Friends' Meeting House;

Bottom: Some of our Bike 'n Hike team pause in the shade by St Mary's Old Linlade.

Choral Evensong Plus – a new venture on the 1st Sunday each month

All Saints' Choral Evensong is a wonderful Act of Worship where we can enjoy a superb, high quality, musical offering of the choir, followed by a social event. Sometimes this might be a Bring and Share meal; or wine & cheese; or, as on All Saints Sunday, soup and fireworks. Last year, in December, we joined the clientele of the Black Horse pub in the High Street for an hour of Carol Singing. It was a great evening.

Whatever the 'Plus', Choral Evensong is a time for quiet reflection, while basking in some fabulous music; the 'Plus' is a time to enjoy a sense of community.

So, on 1st October, join us for Choral Evensong PLUS soup and ploughman's supper, followed by autumn puddings. Soft drinks and tea will be provided but if you would like a stronger or more exciting tippie, please bring your own.

There is a signup sheet on the church notice board where you can choose an item or items to bring and share for an evening of worship, song, food and friendship.

We look forward to sharing the evening with you.



Tell out my soul:

*A series exploring how elements of our worship
What we do and why we do it.*

This month:

Smells and Bells ...

by Dr. John Wallace

The style of worship at the Parish Eucharist, both at All Saints and St. Barnabas, is generally called 'High Church'. It involves significant ceremonial as Fr. Bernard described in last month's magazine. This form of worship came to prominence as a result of the Oxford Movement which can be said to have begun with a sermon in Oxford by John Keble in 1833. The idea that worship should be an experience of 'something other' grew, especially among clergy who were working in what we would now call 'deprived parishes'. R F Littledale in 1868 said: 'Ritualism is a sort of excursion train on Sunday, to bring the poor man, out of his dull, squalid, every-day life into a land of beauty, colour, light and song.'

Scholars generally have agreed that there were six key and essential features of Anglo-Catholic ritual, one of which is the use of the thurible with incense in worship. Both All Saints and St Barnabas adhere to four of the other five – the missing one is the celebration of the Eucharist facing away from the people – this was widely discontinued after Vatican 2!

So what about incense? What actually is it and why do we use it? It is a mixture of a number of aromatic resins and has been used in worship in many religions from several thousand years BC. There are around 50 references to it in the Old Testament, all in the context of worship. Psalm 141 verse 2 'Let my prayer rise before you as incense.' So it has been seen as symbol of prayer. It also signifies that something is being blessed and made ready for the service of God.



So, how is it used in worship? Inside the thurible there is a copper bowl. Before the service, the thurifer (literally the incense-carrier) places a number of round charcoal discs in the bowl and lights them. These discs are impregnated with saltpetre to make them light easily (so unlike our barbeques with which many of us struggle)!

They have an indentation into which the priest will spoon the incense which is contained in a 'boat' so called because of its shape. The top cover is closed and the thurible swung on its long chain to create the necessary draught to keep the charcoal alight. Then all is ready. Incense is again put on before the Gospel Procession and also whilst the altar is being prepared.



But never forget the important practical use. Until the late Victorian era, most people were smelly because bathing was irregular and showers didn't exist. Incense disguised this. I remember reading in the history of my Cambridge College, a discussion within the Governing Body about the provision of a bath house (around 1908). One of the dons is recorded as saying: 'Why do the young gentlemen need a bath – they are only here for just over eight weeks?'

Now the bells bit. I'm not referring to the change ringing in the tower but the role of bells in worship and during the Eucharistic Prayer. We need to remember that for much of the church's history the Eucharist was celebrated in Latin, so a bell, called the 'Sanctus Bell' was rung so that the people would know that the bread and wine had been consecrated. Incomprehensibility and invisibility needed to be overcome – hence the bells.



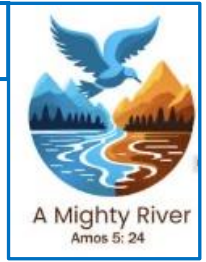
This practice has continued, although in reality being totally unnecessary. In many Anglo-Catholic churches, as the Sanctus Bell was rung at the altar, a bell in the tower was also rung, to signify that the consecration was taking place - a witness originally to those who had to work in the fields to pause from their work and make the sign of the cross, even if they could not be present at the Mass, but also to the wider community. Many churches today continue this practice, even in suburban London.



Should we find a way of doing this again? It raises questions in the community and gives a hook on which to witness to our faith. 'Why does All Saints ring a bell at roughly 10.05am on a Sunday morning?' This was the practice at All Saints before the 1985 fire. There was a rope from the belfry hanging down into the North Transept and at the appropriate time, someone designated would toll the bell 3 times 3. If you look to the top left of the door that now leads into the Coffee Shop, you will see the groove, worn into the stonework, over centuries of tolling.

So two features of our style of worship – probably not essential, but both have meaning if we look for it. Above all they connect us into our heritage of worship and the traditions that have been part of our parishes for nearly 150 years.

John Wallace



The Church of England, the World Council of Churches and many ecumenical partners celebrate Creation Season from September to early October. This year's theme is Let Peace and Justice Flow from the prophet Amos who cries: *"Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"* [Amos 5:24.]

We are asked, as the people of God, to work together on behalf of all Creation, as part of a mighty river of peace and justice to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity.

The loss of natural habitats and biodiversity, and climate change are happening at an alarming rate – and we are urged to make peace with the earth. Justice is a call to repent and to change our attitudes, and as we join with other churches in this, hope is created instead of despair.

We've seen horrific extreme climate events – floods in Libya, wildfires in Greece and North America, cyclones in Africa and Malaysia and the hottest year ever in 2023. In the UK, our biodiversity (ie variety and balance of natural habitats and life forms) is in the bottom 10% in the world. How did that happen in our "green and pleasant land"?

Inspiring things are happening among churches globally – find out more on the Season of Creation website: <https://seasonofcreation.org/> or from Christian Aid.

In the UK there are great efforts by churches and other organisations to restore the balance of nature, eg: rewilding land around Bristol Cathedral into meadows of native plants; support for farmers to rewild less productive farmland; the Knepp estate in Sussex now an exemplar site for rewilding, has seen the return of white storks to England after 400 years, and similar projects by Oxford Colleges, Scottish Islands and Royal Estates. The RHS and several churches and cathedrals have embraced "sustainable floristry" saying no to floral foam as it doesn't biodegrade and is deadly to wildlife, while many churchyards including our own are well managed havens for nature.

We can all play our part at home in nurturing God's Creation - here are some ideas:

- Got a garden? Don't be overly tidy – piles of leaves, old logs and twigs make a great habitat for all kinds of wildlife from hedgehogs to beetles;
- Bug hotels made from a log pile or leaving a dead tree make a great home for lots of different insects, attracting birds like woodpeckers. Ask the Church Gardeners how;
- Buy locally grown flowers, not exotics flown halfway across the world; don't use oasis;
- Do less mowing with a patch of your lawn turned into a pretty wildflower meadow – watch BBC Gardeners World or see the RHS website for more information;
- Help look after some of the 19 Bee Friendly sites managed by Friends of the Earth across Leighton Buzzard: <https://southbedsfoe.co.uk/>

Katrina Grant
on behalf of Eco Church

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