

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

New term, new start



Dear Friends,

I always found new terms exciting for the new opportunities that they offered and the fresh start that they provided both when I was studying and when I was teaching. The summer holidays had been long enough to feel that all the things I had been longing to do during the term but hadn't had time to do had been more or less achieved, new places had been explored, friends had been seen and now it was time to make better progress than ever before!

I feel like that when looking at the great opportunities that we have here at All Saints.

I believe that it is God's will that we seek to grow our congregation and reach out to even more families and young people with the love of Christ.

In order to do this the Internal Affairs Committee and PCC have decided that it would be good to re-arrange two of our services so that we have a service for all the church family at 10.00am on the first Sunday of the month and that Matins moves to the third Sunday of the month, followed by a short Holy Communion service. This new arrangement will begin in October.

We are holding the Soul Searching meetings, to which everyone is invited, to think about how life at All Saints is progressing and share ideas together on how we might work even more effectively to share the good news of God's love in our worship and life together.

The Family Service that we used to have at 11.30 was growing and we have had some

great services with Mothering Sunday and its posy making, the Blessing of Pets and the Trains Service to name but a few. However, we had found that this was quite a late service for children who were beginning to feel hungry etc. and the first Sunday of the month had become exhausting for those taking part in at least three services!

The 10:00 service will have many of the characteristics of our usual services, with a choir, but it will be shorter and more orientated to appealing to all ages and to those who are new to the church as well.

I believe that we are all called to reach out and share the good news and I would like you all to join me at these **All the Church Family services at All Saints** and you could even invite your friends and neighbours too!

Love,
Jo

Get Ready for "Back to Church" Sunday on September 28th

"I haven't seen in Church for ages".

Surely we all know quite a few people that used to be church members, but seem to have fallen by the wayside. Then there are all the baptism and confirmation families, and many others, who have shown interest in the Church, but somehow never found the opportunity to come regularly.

"Back to Church" Sunday, a national event which will be held on September 28th

(Harvest Festival for us), is an ideal time to invite people, as there will be lots of other new people, (so they won't feel that they stand out). Churches will be holding their normal services, but with an especially warm welcome, rather like an open day!

This could suggest the use of well loved and well known hymns, a direct and meaningful sermon, and afterwards using proper, freshly brewed coffee (fair trade, of course) and home made cakes as people mix together.

Each of us can be involved, thinking and praying about people we could invite Back to Church. Each of us fills in at least one invitation card (which will be in Church from the beginning of September) for people we remember used to come to All Saints, and perhaps for a neighbour, friend or even family member that we think might be interested in coming (Back) To Church.

Invitations can also be sent to parents through schools, baptism lists, previous electoral rolls etc. People who have never been to church are also very welcome!

In order to make the most of this event we also need to produce a welcome pack containing leaflets about church activities, and also to plan a course, such as Emmaus for later this year to invite people to. Manchester diocese has successfully held a "Back to Church" Sunday for several years and it has proved to increase congregation sizes - initially extremely well, but even many months later by 10%.

My previous congregation in Reading increased by about 40% on the day and we were still up in numbers by 20% a year later.

Many of the churches in St Albans Diocese are participating in this, and I do hope that we will all take this opportunity to invite someone to church with us on September 28th as we can all make a difference when it comes to growing our congregation!

Love,
Jo

Hertford Team Ministry

The consultation process finished in mid-July and the proposal was confirmed. As of August 1st we have been a team ministry. There will be a service to formally launch the team later in the year once everyone is back from holiday and can agree a date.

Rev Jo Loveridge, Team Rector, said "We can achieve so much more together than alone, developing together, thinking strategically about growing our churches, our pastoral care and our outreach.

"We will be able to create a broader vision achieving more together than separately, the whole being greater than the sum of the parts, reflecting more truly the Body of Christ.

"As we are at the beginning of this process we have the ideal opportunity to set the team up as we think will be best for Hertford. Please do join us in this exciting adventure."

In the meantime please pray for all of us as we start on this new chapter in our ministry to Hertford.

*Heavenly Father,
We pray for the Churches of Hertford:
For Holy Trinity with Christ Church and St
Leonard Bengoe,
For All Saints,
For St Andrew with St Nicholas, and St
Mary Hertingfordbury,
For Holy Trinity, Little Amwell;
As we become a Team.*

*Bless Jo Loveridge, our Team Rector, and
Robert Thompson, Alan Stewart and Nick
Sharp, our Team Vicars, and all who work
and serve you in our churches.*

*Help us all to serve you together,
dedicating ourselves to your Kingdom
and your Mission
So that working together we may reflect
your love in our lives,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.*