

All Saints Alive

All good gifts around us

Reader Janet Bird encourages us to look for them!

September means many different things to different people. To children it means the end of the long summer holidays and the challenge of a new class or even a new school. For many of us it means harvest and harvest festivals.

For All Saints' this year it means our Harvest Festival of Music and Flowers to be held from 21st to 23rd September. This promises to be a wonderful weekend and is being held instead of our normal Christmas Fayre. Just like the Fayre the success or failure depends on how many people are able to help, and I urge you to consider what you can do and get in touch with Dorothy Toyn to volunteer your services.

For very many people September evokes very sad memories. For those who experienced the Second World War September 1939 will be forever in their memories as it saw the outbreak of the war which changed their lives and brought such sorrow to so many families. More recently we were all appalled by the horror of the terrorists' attacks on America on September 11th 2001.

However despite the sad memories September is also a time for giving thanks for all the good things which God sends to us and perhaps gives us a chance to consider just how much we have to be thankful for.

Why are people very quick to complain but not so quick to say thank you?

I remember once phoning BT to thank them for the speed with which they had installed a new phone. It took me several attempts before the operator understood that I was

ringing to say thank you and not to complain. "People don't do that" I was told.

I often think at funerals just how sad it is to hear people talking in glowing terms about the recently departed, when they probably were too embarrassed to tell them how much they were loved when they were alive. I am now making a conscious effort to tell people just how much they are appreciated and usually people react favourably, although some may think I'm a little crazy!

At All Saints' we have so much to be thankful for. Despite having no permanent priest for the last year, we have been able to continue to worship thanks to the hard work and support of so many local clergy and church members. Especially we need to thank Richard Toyn and Wendell Newbold and we particularly hold Wendell, together with Sue and Matthew, in our hearts at this time as we all pray that Wendell will soon be well and back with us again.

For some time there was a feeling that things were going slowly and we would be without a priest for quite some time, but now there is a sense of optimism as we look forward to welcoming the Rev Jo Loveridge as our new Priest-in-Charge.

For some days now I have had a song going around in my head. It was recorded by the Byrds during the 1960's and the title is *Turn, Turn, Turn*. As you will know if you've ever listened to the words they are taken from Chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes.

'To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven'

These words seem to me to be important for many of us today who find it difficult to be patient and put our trust in God, and perhaps particularly for the people of All Saints' over the last year. We want things to happen according to our timescale, but God has a different timescale. God has a plan for all of us, there will be good times and there will be bad times, but always God will be there for us.

As we look forward to November let us remember Jo and her husband in our prayers as they prepare to embark on the next stage of their ministry. May we all do our best to make them feel welcome and may our hearts and minds be open to any new challenges to enrich and enliven the spiritual life of Hertford, and in particular the Christian community which is All Saints.

Introducing the new Priest-in-Charge, Rev. Jo Loveridge.....

The Bishop of St Albans has appointed the Reverend Joan, known as Jo, Loveridge, currently Priest-in-Charge of St Mary the Virgin Burghfield in the Diocese of Oxford and Area Dean of Bradfield, to be Priest-in-Charge of All Saints Hertford and Team Rector (designate) of the proposed Hertford Team Ministry. This appointment is subject to the completion of the customary legal formalities. She will be licensed on All Saints Day (1st November) at 8.00 p.m. Meanwhile, please remember Jo and her family in your prayers as we look forward to welcoming her.



I was born in Cornwall, but spent most of my childhood in Cheltenham. My father was a

church organist and my mother, who is Dutch, loved reading Bible stories to my brother and myself and perhaps as a result of this upbringing we both felt called to be ordained (my brother is Rector of Hitchin!).

Whilst reading Theology at King's College, London, I felt sure that the Church of England would make the decision to ordain women but the decision was made that the time was not right. The Dean of Kings had patronisingly said; "well, why not marry a priest and become a clergy wife?" and although I had no intentions of following this advice I found myself in love with Doug, who was working in a parish in Brighton and so we married in my final year at University.

I qualified as a teacher at the London Institute of Education and taught at North London Collegiate School, an independent girls' school. Jon, Pete and Tom were born and Doug moved to become Vicar of Hurst in Berkshire. I taught at The Forest, a boys' comprehensive school nearby (quite a contrast to the previous school), for over ten years, until the Church at last decided that women could be ordained. I became curate at Earley St Peter's, a large church with a good choral tradition. I became chair of Churches Together.

Four years later I became the Priest-in-Charge of Burghfield in Berkshire and a year later I was invited by the Bishop to become the Rural Dean. Doug, my husband, has moved on from parish ministry to hospital chaplaincy and will move from his present post at the Royal Berkshire Hospital to Chelmsford Hospital.

Over the years I have come to realise the value of sharing the Gospel, of working across the community, and the importance of high standards in the church's worship and I believe that we can work together to further these aims now and in the years to come. I am really looking forward to meeting you all and to working together to share the love of God in Hertford.

Yours in Christ,
Jo