

# All Saints Alive

## VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

### Care for God's creation

*So God created human beings, he blessed them, and said, I have provided all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit for you to eat.*

Dear Friends,

Here in Hertford, we are lucky that there is so much evidence of God's wonderful creation all about us; from the deer wandering around the churchyard, to birds wheeling over Hartham Common and the tall, majestic trees beyond the Warren. There is always something that takes my breath away and reminds me that we have so much to see and enjoy.

This time of year, following the joy of Harvest, is a great opportunity to thank God for creation and to celebrate all that we have been given. In doing so we must also take time to reflect on our responsibility towards creation, and our care for the world. These days we may miss much of the natural cycle of life, the wonder of growth and the pleasure of eating our own produce as we do not grow so much of our own food in our gardens (although quite a few enthusiastic people do still have a vegetable garden or allotment).

Recent world food shortages can remind us that food does not originate in a supermarket, and that we need to be responsible consumers. Perhaps the rising prices will encourage more of us to return to nature, grow more of our own food, and incidentally become more attuned to the greatness of creation and our own responsibilities. We might even become more physically and spiritually healthy as a result!

Recently we have heard news of banks and other companies, long established, in a process of turmoil and collapse, perhaps due in

many ways to people's greed and folly. There have been destructive storms, seemingly more frequent and more dangerous in these days of global warming, ripping across the most vulnerable countries of the world where people have little protection due to their poverty, stemming from the inequality of wealth distribution in the North and South. Perhaps worst of all we see wars and unrest where people's lives seem to count for nothing.

Our belief in creation and God's love means that we should reflect on how to respond in what we do, how we need to pray earnestly for the troubled parts of the world and take initiatives for a more creation-centred life in the world.

Our response to the love of our Creator God for each one of us should surely begin in living creative rather than destructive lives. We can focus on caring for our environment, on avoiding waste, on recycling, on deciding whether there are causes which we feel called to work for or give to. This is good for us, for humanity's future, and is an essential part of the Gospel which teaches us to appreciate the creation and to pray and work for the well-being of our neighbours in God's world.

Yours in Christ  
Jo

#### **A Prayer by Susan Williams:**

*Lord, come to your throwaway society and give us a greater care for your gifts, that the resources of your earth may be used for the needs of all your world and all may have enough. Amen*



## The Hertford Team

“Now we are Four!”

Almost overnight, it seemed, four priests in charge in Hertford, Robert Thompson, Alan Stewart, Nick Sharp and I, on 1<sup>st</sup> August, found ourselves with a change in our job titles from Priest in charge to Team Vicar or Team Rector which meant that we no longer work alone but together as part of a team.

Or should it really be “Now we are Six”? After all there are six churches; Holy Trinity with Christ Church and St Leonard, Bengeo, All Saints, St Andrew with St Nicholas and St Mary Hertingfordbury, and Holy Trinity, Little Amwell which are part of the Hertford team. (Yes, the names do suggest more than six but there are only six buildings. Even All Saints was All Saints with St John at one point!)

Or should it be “Now we are Hundreds” as we can count collectively all of our congregations and when we get together we will pack our churches and the Team strategy is to grow our membership!

I had been keen to rearrange one of the poems from Now We are Six by AA Milne as I was thinking about this article but looking at the selection of poems again, I was struck by how individualistic they are, as they were written from a child’s perspective! This would have reflected our parish lives well before, but now, the great thing about being a team is that we are not alone, we are not having to do everything by ourselves, as together we now can support one another as we follow the Gospel imperative to love and serve the Lord.

As clergy we have been meeting every Thursday lunchtime to share: praying, planning and listening together. We find that we get on really well and have become good friends, trusting one another and supporting each other and throwing creative ideas around to think them through together. We have had a joint celebration on Ascension Day, the PCCs and all

interested people were invited to a joint team presentation and now a team council is to be formed meeting once a term.

Each parish will retain its own identity and each parish will, for the foreseeable future, retain its own priest. We will be able to plan evangelism, courses, youth work and many other things strategically together.

I am sure that we all feel that churches should be able to live and act in unity and accord, following the way of Christ. There are much greater challenges for God’s people to rise to, but it is a significant step for our Anglican churches to agree to work together for the good of our town. We respect and value one another, and it is my prayer and expectation that the Holy Spirit will lead us into a deepening sense of mutual care and shared witness.

Yours in Christ,

Jo

## New Service pattern

We remind everyone that a new pattern of 10:00 am services starts this month. All others are unchanged.

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	All the Family service
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	Parish Communion
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	Matins with Holy Communion
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Parish Communion
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Special service

