

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

Shall I stay for that cuppa?



Dear Friends,

On Sunday mornings at about 11.15, just after the service, you will find us all crowding around under the bell tower, young and old, families, couples and single people, balancing biscuits and cups, chatting and talking to one another.

To look at us, because of our different backgrounds and age range, you might think that we have little in common with each other by the usual standards, but we have just been celebrating together the great feast of God's love. Our hearts are in our eyes as we look at each other. We are engaged in the amazing challenge that has been given to each of us to see each other as God sees us. That is, as precious beyond price, for reasons quite other than the usual cultural norms: status, beauty, charisma, intellect, confidence, wealth or authority.

It could be said to be an impersonal way of loving, since it does not take into consideration what we ourselves like or want but, looked at another way, it's very, very personal. Its focus is all on the other, all on what they are actually like, not as we can hope or know, but as a loving creator who reads us, without illusion from within and delights in us anyway!

This vision is the kind that can easily be swept away in the storms of life, with our best selfless attention, but something is retained and with sustained Sunday by Sunday worship, we can catch the habit and sustain it in practice for longer beyond the church's sacred space.

It is a source of great pleasure as well, in some ways it is not dissimilar to the way in

which we enjoy the characters in a novel or in a TV drama, whether or not they fall comfortably within what we thought before we started reading or watching, were the natural bounds of our sympathy, preference and interests.

The grace that we experience in the worship, of forgiveness, and God's boundless overflowing love, makes us better readers of one another. We don't know what they may have received forgiveness for but we know they were forgiven as we were, and for moments and hours and, with practice, days and weeks, we manage to see people with calm, kind ease.

"Though we are many, we are one body because we all share in one bread."

Yes, and then we may fall and fail, and we go on picking ourselves up and trying, hoping to do better, receiving God's amazing grace so that our broken world will heal, and reflect the wholeness and love of our creator and the Kingdom will come!

So, when we can, let's enjoy that cuppa together, after the service, as it's vital to our Christian way of life!

Love
Jo

Would you like to Help?

We rely totally on volunteers to keep All Saints' going and growing!

We are looking for a **co-ordinator for our Prayers and Bears group** that meets once a month on the first Tuesday of every month.

We have people to make tea and even lead the services but it would be great to have someone to open up the Church and set up in the Memorial Chapel and arrange the rota and possibly plan the activities. Kay used to lead this but after three years of building up a very lively and successful group she feels that it would be good to spend more time with Andrew, who retires this month! Please see Jo or Kay to find out more.

Our Church is beautifully kept by volunteers who work in teams to dust and clean. We really need **a few more people to help us keep All Saints' clean** and tidy and fresh, so that it remains the glorious place for sacred worship and for the community. The cleaning times are fairly flexible and the rota means that people are asked to help clean every 6 weeks. Please talk to Jo to find out more.

Martin and Wendell keep our publicity going very well with the website, noticeboards and posters. Now we need **a press officer** to help with wider media publicity. From time to time our events need wider publicity in the newspapers, diocesan newspaper and local radio. If you would like to know more about this role or feel that this would be good experience for a young person looking at a career in PR and media please talk to Jo.

James Gough MA FRCO – our new Assistant Director of Music



James graduated with a Master of Arts in Organ Performance from the Royal Academy of Music in 2009, where his principal organ teacher was Nicolas Kynaston.

During his time at the Academy, James gained the Fellowship Diploma of the Royal College of Organists as well as the Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music teaching diploma. He was also the recipient of several Academy

prizes including the Eric Thiman Organ Prize for solo organ, open to all RAM organ students.

James has taken part in numerous masterclasses with internationally acclaimed organists Olivier Latry, Daniel Roth, Bine Bryndorf, Piet Kee, James O'Donnell, Patrick Russill and David Titterington amongst others. He was chosen to play the organ for Elton John's visit to the Academy and has also taken part in numerous performances abroad with the organ department including South Germany, Sweden, Denmark and France.

During this period, James was also Organ Scholar at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street where he performed regularly with the professional choir and music team for services and concerts.

As a solo recitalist, James has played in many of the U.K's most prestigious venues including St Paul's, Westminster Cathedral, The Temple Church, St Bride's, various Oxford chapels, Worcester, Bristol, and Coventry Cathedrals and Bath Abbey.. He has also given a number of world premiere performances by renowned composers including David Bednall and Diana Burrell, with the latter forming part of London's Spitalfields Festival.

James has recently worked at Bishops Stortford College as Musician-In-Residence, and as well as taking up the role of Assistant Director of Music at All Saints, he is also the College Organist and Teacher of Academic Music at Haileybury School.

