

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



Fear, hope and love

Dear Friends,

As I write, MI5 are saying that the threat of terror is at its highest – and that is likely to continue for some considerable time. How do we live with that, how should we cope with this fearful prospect?

In late July we commemorated the beginning of the Battle of the Somme, 100 years ago, particularly the grievous death of many soldiers in the Hertfordshire regiment. That terrible battle finally ended in November, after many more casualties, and it is hard to imagine how much courage it must have taken to continue the fight against evil and the fear that must have haunted so many. It is some small encouragement to know that the slaughter ended and a year later, the Armistice was signed. Meanwhile, we remember the fallen on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th this year.

More recent terror events are well-known, and the inhuman actions of a few people can make us feel extremely uncomfortable if not sometimes fearful. The chances of being directly affected are rare, but we know it is possible, but if we allow fear to dominate our lives then they have won. The way events are reported can give additional power to these vile events, for while it is right that we should be aware we do not need to be frequently reminded or have them somewhat sensationalised.

The terrible shooting in Las Vegas was shockingly high in casualties, and no-one seems to have any idea why it happened. Perhaps it was just hatred or evil. Yet people in the United States have the right to bear arms, seemingly a large amount of them if desired. It seems that they are actually all

afraid of each other, and perhaps of some terrible event happening to cause a social breakdown. They seem to be allowing their fear to dominate their lives. Living in fear is not a good way to exist.

On 31 October we remembered the onset of the Reformation, when Martin Luther asserted that the church of his time had moved away from Biblical truth. He had a near-fatal accident which made him fearful and when he looked closely at the Bible he noticed that there is nothing there about earning our way through good works or donations, but a great deal about God's free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. We cannot help ourselves, God had to come among us to suffer and die upon the cross for our salvation.

Then and now, we need to accept God's love, to know that the victory over this world's pains has been won for us, and rejoice in the hope which God alone can give us.

There have always been threats to life, one way or another, as history teaches us: this is just the modern equivalent – and yes, a pretty awful one at times. In the face of this, we can feel secure by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord of our lives, so that we live for him and not for ourselves alone. In the face of our mortality, Jesus tells us not to be afraid, but to trust in God and in Him. Down through the ages, so many believers have found inspiration in the words of Psalm 23 "*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me*".

At the end of November we have another special feast day called Christ the King – even as we remember loved ones who

have died, our mortality and the challenges of our human lives, we celebrate that there is hope in Christ who brings to us the full love and salvation of God. May his peace reign in our lives, for he has come to save us from fear and to give us new hope.

Love,
Jo

PS George Sanders, the Man Booker prize winner, in his acceptance speech last month challenged us all when he asked the question; 'Do we respond to fear, with exclusion, with negative projection and violence or do we take that ancient great leap of faith and do our best to respond with love?'

An Appeal from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

This year All Saints' is running at a deficit and by the end of the year it will be about £7,000. Everyone has been very careful to keep the running costs as low as possible and we have tried very hard to encourage donations and use the Church for concerts and events.

Unfortunately if we continue to have such a deficit year on year by 2020 we will be in real difficulty and may not be able to keep the Church open! We are looking at how we might use the Church as a community asset and gain revenue that would ensure a firm and secure footing for the Church in the decades to come. A not for profit organisation called HeartEdge will be our consultants to help us to look at this (people who are on this body include Revd Sam Wells from St Martin's in the Fields, Revd Lucy Winkett from St James Piccadilly and other large well run and thoughtfully maintained churches all over the country).

To ensure that All Saint's does not go into the red, please can I ask you to consider prayerfully giving a donation or increasing your stewardship promises please. May I suggest that you might consider the sort of generous present that you would give to a loved one for a special gift?

This time of donation will be from All Saints' November 5th to the end of the year. We have special gift envelopes for your gifts and pledges which will be out in the pews over the next two months.

Thank you very much for your past generosity which has meant that we have been able to keep All Saints in great condition and the good news of the love of God has been shared in our community.

Yours in Christ,
Love, Jo

Wills: Making a huge Difference

This month quite a few solicitors are donating the fee that they would normally expect from helping us make a will to charity so it is a great time to make a will or change it!

Please can I encourage you to consider leaving money to All Saints' in your will? Such gifts can would make a great difference to All Saints' particularly in maintaining the beautiful building and can make a difference to death duties. If you would like to know more about this please let me know. Jo

Will Aid - The charity Will writing scheme

Will Aid is a special partnership between the legal profession and nine of the UK's best-loved charities. Every November, participating solicitors waive their fee for writing a basic Will. Instead, they invite clients to make a voluntary donation to Will Aid – we suggest £95 for a single basic Will and £150 for a pair of basic 'mirror' Wills.

With Will Aid, everyone benefits. You get a professionally drawn-up Will and peace of mind, while the charities receive much-needed donations for their vital work.

<https://www.willaid.org.uk/>