

# All Saints Alive

## VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

### ***Spot the Holy Family .....***

Dear Friends,

In early October, I was regaled, with my fellow shoppers, with racks of items ready for Christmas. I was so moved that I took a photo, here it is:



All those familiar characters from the wonderful story of Our Lord's birth – the polar bears, the penguins: well, they say it was "In the bleak midwinter", don't they?

Perhaps the silver deer may remind us of his relevance to this great county of Hertfordshire? We can play a game like "Where's Wally?" – I call it "Spot the Holy Family". If you look closely, they are indeed there.

Surely the original event was very ordinary so that few could see the glory of God



coming among us in human form. But for those who seek God, he is there to be found, though he may not be blindingly obvious today as always and we need to be open to the possibility of finding faith in the One who made and loves us all.

Among all the OTT paraphernalia of life in this festive season, can we Spot the Holy Family? For if we can see them, and recognise Jesus Christ the Lord, then we too can become holy and know we are enfolded in God's love and salvation.

Love Jo

## **New Beginnings in Communication**

This is the last time that All Saints Alive will be available in this format as the church magazine. It has served as a great way of communicating what is going on in the church and the wider community in the past but now in these times of social media and instant communications it has rarely been read in detail and the circulation has been declining.

It is now time to make progress with a quarterly newssheet which will hold all the essential information about forthcoming services and events, a short reflection and we will be able to distribute it more widely free of charge. We feel that this will make it possible to share our caring ministry across the parish and encourage people to engage with the Good News which God has for us in these troubled times.

As well as the newssheet we will be continuing to produce Posters, Fliers and to expand our use of our website and social

media – where we post almost daily to over 400 followers, some of whom then re-post our messages. @AllSaintsHertf finds us on Facebook, Twitter and/or Instagram.

Martin Penny has ensured a consistently high standard in editing All Saints Alive. Don Graves has given very generously of his time encouraging local business to advertise and in so doing made sure that the magazine did not cost the church financially. Rosemary Graves, Iain and Ann Wilson led the distribution teams. Thank you to Martin, Don, Rosemary, Iain and Ann and everyone involved in the magazine to make it such a success in the past.

Thank you to all our advertisers for supporting us and to you our readers.

# Live the Challenge

The Diocese is pleased to be running the 2019 Advent Challenge – ‘Jesus And Justice’ – in partnership with our friends at Red Letter Christians UK.



Contributors to this Challenge come from our

own Diocese and people from the Red Letter Christians UK Network of Christians, actively working for the common good, and will contain inspirational photos and stories from a wide variety of contexts.

In keeping with previous years, participants of the Challenge will receive a daily email during Advent, to encourage relationship with God, engaging with the story, and a passion for ‘Jesus And Justice’. Each week focuses on a particular theme, and each Sunday there will be a longer session suitable for use in small groups

Sign up at  
<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/live-the-challenge/>



Based on the success of #FollowTheStar in 2018, the CofE is excited to announce that the national Advent and Christmas campaign will continue with #FollowTheStar in 2019 and 2020!

As in 2018, there will be:

- Christmas reflections available in print, email, app and audio formats
- an online shop to buy items for your church
- video adverts
- a social media campaign and much more!
- Weekly Advent reflections from the Archbishop of Canterbury



There is also a free, downloadable app available at  
<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/follow-the-star>

Drawing inspiration from the well-known carol “We Three Kings”, the Follow The Star app offers daily reflections for each day between Christmas Day and Sunday 5 January.

Each one includes a picture, a short Bible passage, a simple prayer and a challenge to reflect or act differently.

The FollowTheStar app can help you:

- Find a few minutes each day of Christmas to pause and reflect
- Read a welcome from Archbishops Justin Welby and John Sentamu and a sample day's material
- Read or listen to 12 days of brand-new reflections, written and read by Mina Munns
- Explore daily Christmas family activities to help all ages engage with the daily themes of Follow The Star.

Wherever you are on your own journey, Follow The Star will help you see your life afresh through the light of the Christmas star, a sign of God's hope and promises.

## **Prayer at All Saints**

We greatly value the Prayer Lists for the Sick and the Departed posted weekly in our notice sheet which enable us all to pray with understanding for those people listed. We feel the prayerful people at All Saints would be able to add to these prayers by the introduction of a Prayer Tree and a Prayer Board. Any member of the congregation could post prayer requests for individuals, and for the needs of our community, our nation and for international situations. Hopefully it would also enable anyone coming into the church to post prayer requests.

Requests for prayer can be sent by email to [prayer-requests@allsaintshertford.org](mailto:prayer-requests@allsaintshertford.org)

Prayers posted or emailed will be collected, and a group of people will meet every week to pray for these requests. Anyone interested in being part of that group, either in person or via email, please contact Helen Harvey-Wright [wright.helen.m@gmail.com](mailto:wright.helen.m@gmail.com) or Nerine Chalmers [njchalmers@gmail.com](mailto:njchalmers@gmail.com).

The Prayer Group, at which everyone is welcome, will continue to meet after the 10 o'clock service on the third Sunday of the month.

In addition, prayer support will be available in the Memorial Chapel after every 10.00 a.m. service for anyone wishing for it.

We would welcome further suggestions which could engage us in meaningful prayer.

We pray that you will all know God's love and peace in your lives.

Helen Harvey-Wright and Nerine Chalmers

## **Broken**

At the end of January and the beginning of February, we plan to run a series of 3 sessions where we will show episodes of the BBC drama *Broken* followed by discussion. *Broken*, a six part drama written by Jimmy McGovern and starring Sean Bean as Michael Kerrigan a Catholic priest, was broadcast on BBC One in 2017. In the series, Michael Kerrigan is the priest of a community parish in Northern England. He struggles to deal with his childhood trauma while trying to guide a group of parishioners through their everyday troubles.

The discussion will be based on a course written by three Anglican priest friends working in the North East of England. The subtitle is 'a course about real life and real faith'. The aim is that it will help people to engage with the realities of life and how they can be framed by faith in Jesus Christ.

There are 6 sessions, and we will cover 2 each week, on 20th and 27th January, and 3rd February at 7:30 p.m.:

1. Beauty in the ordinary
2. Loving the unlovable
3. Guilt and shame
4. Impossible Situations
5. The power of Holy Communion
6. Is the church still relevant and needed today?

All are welcome to attend, and to invite friends and family.