

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



Pay Attention

Dear Friends,

Do you remember when you were told to pay attention at school? Somehow we resented being told off like this as it implied that we had not really been listening or looking at things in detail. Which could well be true! The trouble is, even now, the quality of our listening and our attention is not always that great. Jesus reminds us in his parables to look out, pay attention to signs of the kingdom of God or to be careful about not noticing.

The quality of our listening has an effect on others. You recall how actors and musicians judge their audiences and talk about how it makes a difference to their performance. Soundbites audiences are often commended as they hang on every note in a really encouraging way; alright then, those that have not been lulled off to sleep because of the tranquillity of the situation! Giving good attention to people means that you really hear what they are saying and it becomes more worthwhile.

We think that we listen but we don't all of the time. We even finish one another's sentences or interrupt and fill in pauses with our own stories. We may find ourselves giving advice and even as professional listeners we can be found to do this, equating talking with looking professional. People have also even been known to check their phones during conversations.

Interrupting can seem logical, for if they are telling you about a problem then they will want your suggestions, won't they?! Pause, listen to their ideas, look at the whole picture or as much as you can, pay respectful attention. The story of the Rich

man and Lazarus which Jesus tells reminds us that every day we can fail to notice what is going on, really engage with what is important. We can be at risk of losing something really important and life giving.

Mindfulness has become an important therapy for some in recent years, and I feel that it can be a helpful thing for people who never take time to simply "be".

However, I also believe that prayer can be even more effective, including finding personal space yet with openness to The Divine. Mindfulness has 43 pages and as many categories in Wikipedia. It is being aware of your breathing, exploring your situation, your feelings, to deal with unwelcome thoughts, to overcome stress and anxiety. It certainly is aimed at paying attention but is rather inward looking. Prayer (only one general category in Wikipedia – the secrets of the kingdom of God!) enables our thoughts and feelings to be open to the all-embracing goodness and grace of God.

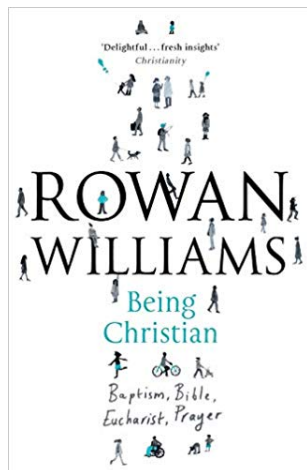
So we can attend to both our deepest thoughts and concerns as well as bringing our burdens and cares to the eternal love of God, who inspires in us hope for this world and the next, in whom we live, and move and have our being.

Jesus challenges us all to pay attention to those things which can really draw us into the kingdom of God. So let's listen to God, to one another as his children - and pay attention to the lessons we all need to learn.

Love,
Jo

A new Book Club

We are starting a new Book Club this term, based on Rowan Williams' book "Being Christian".



This gem of a little book comes from Rowan Williams' deep love of God and his enthusiasm to explore what faith is all about.

It looks at Baptism, Bible, Eucharist and Prayer in a fresh and interesting way and should stimulate our

thoughts and understanding.

If you are interested in joining us please let me know. We could find a mutually suitable day and time and meet together over a cuppa.

Call Jo on 01992 584899 or email vicar@allsaintshertford.org

Commemoration of Faithful Departed

Sunday October 27th

A number of people have expressed concern at the ever-growing length of the list of names read out at this service – particularly about the discomfort amongst our guests, the recently bereaved.

This year, as an experiment, we are experimenting with keeping the list of names read out to those who have passed away in the previous two years.

For those of us who wish to remember others, there will be a Prayer Tree to which labels with names of loved ones can be attached and candles lit.

Heavenly Harmonies

12th October 10.45 for 11.15



**ALLSAINTS
HERTFORD**

HEAVENLY HARMONIES

Coffee, Cake and Choral Classics

Short Choral Concerts featuring well-loved classics of religious choral repertoire explored through song and word.
Refreshments from 10.45am Concert from 11.15am-12.00pm

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 2019

All Saints' Choir

Explore the Agricultural Year



From Plough Sunday and Rogation to Lammas and Harvest.
Music by Byrd, Franck, Greene, Haydn, Rutter and Tallis.

Free Admission with Retiring Collection

Book the Date - For Future Concerts
Saturday 9 November 2019 from 10.45 am
Saturday 7 December 2019 from 10.45 am

ALL SAINTS CHURCH - Queens Road, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG13 8AY
www.allsaintshertford.org

Following the very successful launch concert on 24th August, with an attendance of almost 100, the series continues with a concert by members of All Saints Choir on Saturday 12th October.

Coffee and cake from 10.45. Concert from 11.15-12.00.

Free admission with retiring collection.

The theme is 'The Agricultural Year' and takes us through all four seasons from Plough Sunday, through Rogation and Lammas to Harvest.

The programme includes perennial favourites such as *The Heavens are telling* – Haydn, *For the beauty of the earth* – Rutter, *Thou visiteth the earth* – Greene and *Panis Angelicus* – Franck, plus works by Byrd, Tallis and others.

If anyone is able to baking cakes and/or help on the day, please speak to Martin Penny.