



Sunday 31st October – All Saints & All Souls

Dear Friends, welcome to this week's Newsletter for all our friends and neighbours of Burchetts Green Parish.

This is the season of All Saints and All Souls, but before I say a few words about that – our attention, thoughts and prayers in the next week or so will be captured by the topic of Climate Change, and centred on the **COP26 International Conference in Glasgow beginning this Sunday**. Churches, including our own Diocese, have become increasingly vocal about this issue as Climate Change has passed from future threat to present reality for many around the world, with angry weather and insistent sea level rise making many places increasingly inhospitable. This is an issue of the future of the planet in the form in which we know it; it is an issue of international justice, as the poorest areas of the world are the first to be threatened with the most severe effects; and it is an issue of intergenerational justice – we need to leave our children and grandchildren a world that they can live in well and enjoy, not a world that we have sucked all the goodness out of.

If you want to learn more about this from a Christian perspective, a good starting point is the Diocese of Oxford website (<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/cop26/>).

The **festival of All Saints** is the occasion for us to remember with gratitude all the Christian Saints (whether acknowledged formally as 'Saints' or not) who have witnessed to Christ by their lives and teachings, and have helped to build a kingdom of love, forgiveness and hope whatever the darkness in which they found themselves. As we give thanks for their lives and witness, we ask in the Collect (special prayer for this week) that God will "inspire us to follow their example with boldness and joy." You can find the Collect and Readings as an attachment to this Newsletter.

At the same time, this weekend we also remember our own departed loved ones, whether family or friends – we call this **All Souls Day**. We remember them in love before God, give thanks for all that we received through their earthly lives, and thank God that he keeps safe all who willingly receive his love (in this life or after death) and welcomes them into the joy of heaven. That is God's will and wish for each one of us, freely offered in Christ. And so our first reading this Sunday tells us that "God will wipe away every tear. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." The good things we find in this life – love, joy, hope, creativity, companionship and compassion – will come to full fruition in heaven, and all that spoils are lives now – pain, fear, selfishness, aggression, loneliness and mourning – will be left behind.

We have opportunities to keep both All Saints and All Souls remembrance in our three churches this Sunday. There is a Eucharist for All Saints at Littlewick Green at 9.15am. That service will end with an opportunity to also remember our own loved ones. Then, on Sunday afternoon, both Stubbings Church and Hurley Church will be open between 3pm and 5pm for you to use for quiet time, to remember your loved ones, and for personal prayer and reflection, with gentle background music and an opportunity to light a candle and say a prayer if you wish. Stay as little or as long as you want. We offer this space for you to use as you wish.

Love truly is stronger than death.

Services this Sunday are as follows:

9.15am	Littlewick Green	Eucharist for All Saints, followed by prayer for All Souls
3pm – 5pm	Stubbings	Time of prayer and reflection for All Souls
3pm – 5pm	Hurley	Time of prayer and reflection for All Souls



Remember – Clocks go back one hour this weekend !!

Change to opening hours for Stubbings Church. From 1st November, Stubbings Church will be open on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9am to 12 noon. **St John's Littlewick Green** is open every day 11am – 4pm, and **St Mary the Virgin Hurley** is open every day 8am – 5pm.

The **Oasis Prayer Group** meets this Tuesday 2nd November in the Priory Room Hurley at 2.30pm.

Coffee and Catch-Up is this Wednesday 3rd November in the Stubbings Soltau Centre at 10.30am. All welcome.

Be kind to your loved ones. This season of All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance Sunday reminds us that we are all mortal – death and taxes are a certainty! So this might be a good time to check that your will is up-to-date (or to write a will, if you haven't already done so); remember that bequests to charities are always (I think) free of tax, and this is an opportunity to leave a parting gift for the wellbeing of others in a way that reflects your own priorities and interests. It will also help your relations if they know where to find important papers, and if they know what your wishes are for your funeral. Far from being morbid, a conversation about this is often full of love and joy as you think together about what things have meant most to you through your life, and how you would like your faith (if you have one) reflected in a funeral service. Having an idea of your wishes can be so helpful to relatives when the time comes, at what will always be a distressing time.

Services for Next Sunday 7th November:

9.15am	Littlewick Green	Family Eucharist with hymns and Sunday Club
10.30am	Hurley	God through Music
11 am	Littlewick Green	Baptism of George and Thomas Oakes
5 pm	Stubbings	Choral Evensong

QUENCH, our local Christian bookshop, has been hit hard by the pandemic and is considering the future of its shops, including the one in Maidenhead. Do please pray for them – they are an excellent resource, and they are a Christian presence and witness simply by being on the High Street and testifying to the Christian community in our town. They are a registered charity, and they have a

network of supporters who support them financially in order to maintain that witness and Christian service, so you may like to consider making a donation towards their work.

Parish Office. The Parish Office is open for visitors and phone calls three mornings a week – Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 12 noon. On other days, emails will be attended to on a daily basis. **I can usually be contacted** on revjohnainslie@gmail.com and 01628 629827 (do leave a message on the confidential answering machine if I don't answer).



Our churches are open for private prayer this week:

St John's Littlewick Green – open every day 11am – 4pm
St Mary the Virgin Hurley – open every day 8am – 5pm
St James-the-Less Stubbings – open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am – 12 noon

For our prayers:

The COP26 Climate Change Conference 31st October – 12th November. Olivia, our Bishop of Reading, suggests the following prayer topics:

- Pray for the conference hosts, for wisdom, guidance, and ambition for UK negotiators and Alok Sharma, COP26 president.
- Pray for faith leaders attending the conference.
- Pray for peaceful and fruitful discussions between world leaders.
- Pray for world leaders to make bold commitments to combat climate change.
- Pray for protection and support for developing nations most affected by climate change.

For Burchetts Green PCC, meeting this week.

For the future of our local Christian Bookshop, Quench.

For those of our Parish in any kind of need, sickness, anxiety, fear or loneliness, and for those who help them. Help us all to be more aware of when we can be of assistance to others, and to not be afraid to offer help. For the homeless and those on the margins of society, and those in financial hardship; for the work of Maidenhead Foodshare and those who are dependent upon it.

For the recently departed, including Donald Beale whose funeral rites took place a few days ago.

For all who mourn the death of a loved one at this time.



If you are unable to join us in Church for whatever reason, there are many livestream and recorded services available online. I continue to recommend the daily and Sunday services from Canterbury Cathedral at <https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/worship/online-worship/>

Keep safe, be gentle on yourself, and remember that with God by your side you need never be alone.

With love and prayers,

Fr John Ainslie