

# All Saints Community

## Newsletter

December 2016

Diary dates [What's On](#)

Friday 16th Winter Night Shelter opens at All Saints

**Sunday 18th December, 5.30 pm Service of Lessons and Carols by candlelight**

Monday 19th December 11 am All Saints School Christmas Service for KS2

Tuesday 20th December 11.15 am Christmas Carol Service at Park Vista

Tuesday 20th December, 7.15 pm Fellowship Carol Service

Wednesday 21st December 11.15 am Christmas Carol Service at Park House

**Saturday 24th December, 4 pm Crib Service**

**Saturday 24th December, 11.30 pm Midnight Mass**

**Sunday 25th December, 8 am Said Eucharist and**

**10 am Christmas Day Sung Eucharist.** ( no Evensong today)

### Advent Reflection

Fr Jun

*The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon. Andrew,*

*Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. John 1.35-42*

Advent is a season of an ending and beginning. For the church, it is a starting point of a new year according to the church year. For the world, it is a sign that the year is nearly close to its end.

The church introduces us to a special saint at the beginning of Advent. St. Andrew. The feast of St. Andrew is on 30<sup>th</sup> of November. He is the person whom we meet at the beginning of Advent.

St. Andrew was one of the twelve disciples and according to Matthew and John's gospels, he was one of the first disciples who followed Jesus from the beginning of his ministry. Interestingly there are not many records left for us about St. Andrew and his ministry. However St. Andrew has been believed that he founded the Diocese of Constantinople (today it is called Istanbul), the centre of Greek Orthodox. He also traveled to the northern and eastern part of the Europe for mission and reached to Russia. So St. Andrew is the patron saint of Russia, Romania and Ukraine as well as Scotland. He was martyred at the city of Patras, Greece. He was crucified on the X-shaped cross, now commonly known as St. Andrew's cross.

According to John's gospel, St. Andrew met Jesus when he was following St. John the Baptist as his disciple. St. Andrew followed Jesus as St. John the Baptist recognized Jesus and proclaimed that Jesus is the one who will complete his ministry. St. Andrew is the link that connects the ministry of St. John the Baptist and that of Jesus. He was a person who was standing between the end of the old age and the beginning of the new age and linked them together. He was also a person who invited others to a life of the new age. It was St. Andrew who introduced Jesus to St. Peter and invited him to follow Jesus.

Christians are those who connects the old age and the new age, those who keep the door of their life open so that God's transforming and renewing power can work in their world. For Christian, to be a believer means to take part in the acts of God that shed light into darkness, that makes peace and build bridges in a divided, broken world in history and to invite and welcome others to the history which God creates with his people.

Another person whom the church brings us to remember around Advent is St. Nicholas Ferrar whose commemoration day is on 4<sup>th</sup> of December. He was a deacon of the Church of England in 17<sup>th</sup> century and a business man with a deep faith in God. He is one of those who restored the religious communities in England which had been destroyed since the reign of Henry VIII. Nicholas founded a religious community in a village called Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire. His legacy became the foundation of the revival of religious community in the Church of England and in the wider Anglican Communion.

T.S Eliot honoured Nicholas Ferrar in the *Four Quartet*, naming one of the quartets *Little Gidding*. He wrote in his poem,

*What we call the beginning is often the end  
And to make an end is to make a beginning  
The end is where we start from*

*T.S Eliot, Little Gidding*

December is the last month of the year but at the same time it is the first month of the church year. In Advent, we are reminded that as we finish up our time of the year, our work of the year we begin a new time, new work. Advent is a sign of our faith journey that reminds us at the end of the year that God calls us into the new life when we are faced with the pain and sorrow of many endings in our lives. It reminds us that to believe in God is to see and walk into the new life that God invites us to from the old life as St. Andrew did. And we are to invite and welcome others as well into that new life in Christ. Advent is a time to begin a new ending in God we trust, in fellowship we share with each other.

**Have you joined our planned giving scheme?**

**What is planned giving?** The planned giving scheme is used by members of our church to donate to the church on a regular basis, usually through a standing order.

**Why should I join?** The majority of our income comes through the scheme. A regular donation allows us to budget our expenditure based on regular gifts. If you pay income tax we can automatically claim gift aid on your donation through the scheme.

**Where does the money go?** Donations received through the scheme pay towards all the running costs of the church, this includes:

- Sustain our clergy - Planned giving allows us to pay our Parish Share which is a scheme used across the diocese to pay for, train and house our clergy.
- Paying to insure, maintain, heat and light the church building
- Director Music fees, organists
- Maintaining the organ and running the choir

**How much should I give?** There is no one, easy answer for everyone. If you are seeking guidance, the Church of England recommends, based on biblical teaching 5% of income to your parish and 5% to charities of your choice. We are called to love God and our neighbour and our giving is an expression of that love.

**How do I join?** To join the scheme please speak to Rob Taylor or a member of the Stewardship Committee. Forms can be found in the foyer of the church.

**Park Streets Ahead Residents Association invites neighbourly people of all ages who live locally - and their friends - to**

## **Tea & Cake & Music**

**at All Saints Church Hall, Park Road**

**2-4pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays monthly**

**Drama workshop for age 8+...Activity table for toddlers...Welcome for everyone!**

Helpers, musicians and cake donations are very much appreciated . *If you need help getting to the church hall, please ring Sue on 349907 or Beki on 764130 To book your child into Drama workshop, email [parkstreetsaheadra@gmail.com](mailto:parkstreetsaheadra@gmail.com) and bring £5*

### **Don Snuggs writes:**

It was a cold December in 1940 that I was admitted to hospital for major surgery for life threatening disease. As a child it was reckoned touch and go that I would survive, and this knowledge added to all the other insecurities of the time, to my parents my life was the most important fact of course. There was little left but hope, no antibiotics then, just a handful would have effected a cure had they been discovered at the time, but the knowledge of my hopeless condition, added to Dunkirk, the blitz of our major cities, and the dreadful toll of our food supply by the u boat war, were we ever going to win this war?

But I was unaware of most of this being too ill to notice, and it was not until the Spring that I began to turn the corner, and after three major surgical operations once more came back to reality. I can just recall at my lowest times the concern tears and prayers of my friends and parents ,but one thing I do recall and that was a postcard my father gave me ,it was a picture of two scruffy tramps sitting on the roadside .one said to the other “If we had some ham we could have some ham and eggs ,if we had the eggs” .Yes it made people laugh, but although the real meaning of it was hidden to me as a child, I did not realise the significance of the caption that this was all about hope. I don’t know where that card went, but nearly eighty years later I still remember it and have quoted it many times to my patients when they wanted to give up. Hope indeed for better things to come, and my parents did hope –and pray- and I did get better, and we did get antibiotics, and we did win the war, and we did get free healthcare.

Cast your minds back to the time of Israels’ Babylonian exile-the anguish of it all “How long oh Lord, how long, for deliverance?” Yes they got through it thanks to the goodness of God and hope, which kept them going and they got what they hoped for, but as a nation they still messed it up again and again, and the torment continued, but they still hoped for the deliverance and instead of despair kept at it. We could not have won the war had we not hoped for success, antibiotics would not have been discovered, it was hope in dark times that kept the nation going. Remember Bunyan’s hero

Christian ,when he was held prisoner in the dungeons of Doubting Castle, asking "Why do I lie here in this stinking dungeon . I have in my bosom a key called hope?"and eventually arrived at his desired destination the Heavenly City.

And that is what we look forward to today in Advent, the actual realisation of hope, Almighty God did intervene as the Jews hoped, he sent his only son to sort it out for mankind, and all the things man had hoped for over the centuries , but they didn't recognise him because they wanted a warrior king to kill their enemies, but he sent them a new idea, a baby , a thing that brings love with it. We know now historically what happened, but to the believer we know now what really happened, that this baby had come that we might have life and have it more abundantly, with the promise, not the hope this time, but the promise of sins forgiven and a place in his eternal kingdom, the peace that passeth all understanding, and the way to live in harmony with our neighbours of all persuasions, that's what we celebrate on December 25th,

Yes indeed the world rejected him 2000years ago and still does ,but he's still there for us when we call upon him, and so we will celebrate the wonderful news of what the shepherds found, and the three wise men, and so many more over the millennia. The greatest event in human history when God became man and dwelt among us!

But even as we look forward to Christmas ,don't let us forget that this great triumph of hope has not been replicated in many places and countries where might is right and where you do as you are told ,or else! The great message of love received by the human race is represented as the light of the advent candle which burns clearly, but at times we have to look closely for it and sometimes trim the wick when the flame gets a bit low, but the flame of love is always there. Hope over despair has kept the human race going and will always be there somewhere even though the great nations of the world threaten to blow us all to pieces, babies are still born and bring God's love with them So as we sing Joy to the world let us remember that with him we can have a world full of joy ,and many many people have found it, and we celebrate it with them on December 25th each year.