

October 2020

St Mary's News

The magazine of the
Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin
A Registered Charity
Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire



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From the Rector October 2020

Dear friends,

The month of October ends with the great secular-commercial festival of Halloween, which we all know is really the eve of All Hallows' Day (or All Saints' Day). Until recently I used to complain bitterly about Halloween. I do not remember it being a significant celebration in my own childhood – Bonfire Night was always the thing – and my own children's excitement about Halloween always brought out the grumpy old man in me, muttering and harrumphing about the Americanisation and commercialisation of our culture.

But now I find myself having to eat a rather hefty slice of humble pie: reading Dame Cicely Veronica Wedgwood's two-volume history of the reign of King Charles I, I discovered that Halloween is not in fact an invention of the American sugar industry, but was rather a major celebration in English culture until the Puritans suppressed it in the seventeenth century, replacing it with what was then the violently anti-Catholic celebration of Bonfire Night. (It is curious that Halloween should have persisted in America whilst it was suppressed here – the Puritan influence one would have thought was stronger there than here. I can only imagine that it has something to do with nineteenth century migration to America from across the European continent, and of course the commercial interest of the sugar industry.)

Is it possible to understand Halloween from within a Christian context? I think it is. The eve of All Saints' Day is an appropriate time to reflect on the reality of evil and the fear of evil in our world, as we prepare to celebrate the triumphs of Christ in the lives of the saints. Reflecting on the reality of evil at Halloween gives us a context in which to understand what the saints triumphed over through the grace of God. But as Christians we do not reflect on evil in a spirit of fear: "God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1.7). Instead we rejoice in the triumph of Christ, who "disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them" on the Cross (Colossians 2.15), and in the triumph of His saints who share in His victory.

So this year I propose to put the "Hallow" back in "Halloween", and make a definite attempt to reassert the Christian significance of this day, and of All Saints' Tide more generally. For obvious reasons I do not suppose that there will be much trick-or-treating this year, but on Saturday 31st October, church will be open in the evening. I will attempt to carve some Christian symbols into pumpkins – the Cross, Alpha and Omega, that sort of thing (if anyone fancies helping with that please let me know...). A large bowl of individually-wrapped sweets will be placed next to a hand sanitizer bottle, along with literature explaining the Christian origin of Halloween and the significance of All Saints' Tide. At 8pm the Litany of the Saints will be said, followed by Compline. I do not expect large numbers of people to attend this year, but if we try it out in this necessarily quiet year, next year we will know what we are doing. In time, with God's help it may be that coming to church, enjoying the mysterious quiet and darkness, and grabbing a handful of sweets, becomes a part of the Halloween routine for local families, and that through this they may come to a greater awareness of the Christian significance of All Saints' Tide, and a glimpse of the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

With my prayers,

Fr Jeremy



The Parish Office, Hart Street, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2AU
Tel: 01491 577340
E-mail: office.hwr@btinternet.com
stmaryshenley.org.uk

*Monday is the Rector's day off;
Friday is his study day.
He would appreciate being spared calls on these days except
in an emergency.*

Public worship at S. Mary's

Public worship resumed on Sunday 5th July, but things are not exactly as they were before lockdown started. Please read the following instructions carefully.

Times and locations of services

Sundays

8am Holy Communion (BCP), Jesus Chapel, access through the south door

9.30am Holy Eucharist at the Nave Altar, access through the main doors

11.15am Holy Communion/Matins *at St Nicholas, Remenham*

Mondays – No service

Tuesdays

9am Morning Prayer in the stalls, access through the main doors

7.30pm Holy Eucharist at the High Altar, access through the main doors

Wednesdays

9am Morning Prayer in the stalls, access through the main doors

11am Holy Eucharist in the Jesus Chapel, access through the main doors

Thursdays

9am Morning Prayer in the stalls, access through the south door

10am Holy Eucharist (traditional language) in the Lady Chapel, access through the main doors

Fridays

9am Morning Prayer in the stalls, access through the main doors

12noon Holy Eucharist in S. Leonard's Chapel, access through the main doors

Saturdays

No services

Church opening

Church will be open at the times detailed above, until 5pm on Sundays, and on Wednesdays from 11am – 5pm. We may start closing earlier as the evenings get colder and darker.

Who should come to church?

People who have Covid-19 symptoms **must not come to church** – the key symptoms to look out for are a temperature, a new continuous cough, and/or changes in your sense of taste and/or smell.

People who are vulnerable, either because of age or underlying health conditions, are not encouraged to come to church.

How can I attend church safely?

Church will not be exactly the same as it was before lockdown. For the foreseeable future, the following changes will be in place:

- 1) Face coverings are now mandatory in places of worship; please wear a face mask when in church
- 2) Everyone will be asked to sanitize their hands on arrival using the sanitizer provided; communicants are also asked to sanitize before and after receiving the Sacrament
- 3) Everyone will be asked to provide their name and a telephone number on arrival so it is possible to trace contacts in the (relatively unlikely) event of a church-based outbreak
- 4) Two metres social distancing between individuals (or households) is to be observed; please take particular care when arriving and leaving; seating positions have been pre-marked; the only exception is when receiving Holy Communion from Fr Jeremy
- 5) The Peace will not be shared
- 6) Holy Communion will be offered under one kind only; the chalice will not be offered to the people
- 7) The words of distribution ("The body of Christ") usually said to each communicant will be said to everyone together after Fr Jeremy has himself received the sacrament; all who intend to receive reply "Amen"; the sacrament will be administered by Fr Jeremy silently
- 8) Holy Communion will be received standing, not kneeling
- 9) There will be no congregational singing
- 10) Service books will be quarantined, so each book is used only once a week, removing any risk of transmission
- 11) There will be no refreshments offered after the service
- 12) Fr Jeremy will be using strong hygiene measures at the altar

Please also note that there are many opportunities to worship on weekdays, at services which are usually very thinly attended. The same safety rules will apply at all services.

What is offered for those who cannot attend?

Our 9.30am service will usually be recorded and uploaded to Fr Jeremy's youtube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF0WRLKWtkgWJjZw_d4S6Mw/ .

The Parish Office

Julie is back at work, but the parish office remains closed to visitors. If you need to get in touch, please telephone or email rather than dropping into the office.

Calendar and Prayer Intentions for October 2020

Thursday 1st	S. Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, Apostle of the Franks, 533	Our archdeacons
Friday 2nd	Feria	Those who suffer
Saturday 3rd	Feria	The departed
Sunday 4th	Dedication Festival	The Parish and People of God
Monday 5th	Feria	Those who volunteer to support our parish life
Tuesday 6 th	William Tyndale, Bible Translator, Reformation Martyr, 1536	Biblical scholars
Wednesday 7 th	Feria	Hope
Thursday 8th	Feria	Family life
Friday 9 th	Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, Philosopher, Scientist, 1253	Christians working in the sciences
Saturday 10th	S. Paulinus, Bishop of York, Missionary, 644	The Province and Archbishop of York
Sunday 11th	The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity	The Parish and People of God
Monday 12th	Edith Cavell, Nurse, 1915	Courage
Tuesday 13th	Edward the Confessor, King of England, 1066	Westminster Abbey
Wednesday 14 th	Feria	Our Town Council
Thursday 15 th	S. Teresa of Avila, Teacher of the Faith, 1582	Love
Friday 16 th	Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer, Bishops, Reformation Martyrs, 1555	The suffering church
Saturday 17 th	Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, Martyr, c.107	Those who mourn
Sunday 18th	The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity	The Parish and People of God
Monday 19th	S. Luke, Evangelist	The NHS
Tuesday 20 th	Feria	The Social Services
Wednesday 21 st	Feria	Henley Bellringers
Thursday 22 st	Feria	Henley Deanery and our Area Dean
Friday 23 rd	Feria	Those in need
Saturday 24 th	Feria	The departed
Sunday 25th	The Last Sunday after Trinity	The Parish and People of God
Monday 26 th	Alfred the Great, King of the West Saxons, Scholar, 899	Wisdom
Tuesday 27 th	Feria	Broken families
Wednesday 28th	Ss Simon and Jude, Apostles	Those in despair
Thursday 29 th	James Hannington, Bishop, Martyr in Uganda, 1885	The Church in Uganda
Friday 30 th	Feria	Those who suffer
Saturday 31 st	Martin Luther, Reformer, 1546	The Porvoo Churches

Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust

The second weekend of September was the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust Ride and Stride—the OHCT grants money to many churches in order to maintain historic buildings; St Mary's has benefited from their grants in the past. Stephen Nichols ran between several churches in the area, and if you are interested in sponsoring him you can still do so at <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/StephenNichols2>, or speak to him in church.

It was a gorgeous day to be outside, and I enjoyed meeting others riding and striding between the churches. Most churches were closed, as is understandable in the pandemic, and I was very grateful for the drinks left for visitors at Harpsden church. Each year this event reminds me that there are churches, and Christians, all over the country and all over the world, in whichever direction you travel; the buildings in their age and variety point out that there have been Christian communities for an extremely long time, adapting in whatever way is best for each place and time.

Best wishes

Stephen

Parish Giving Scheme

For his sermon on 26th July Father Jeremy took a text from Matthew 13 44-52:

Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is old and what is new.

There is a lot that is old that we treasure at St Mary's but we do not set our face against change and that includes new ways of giving. The goodbox is back in use and delivering donations and despite lockdown we have received £367 in donations this year. The Parish Giving Scheme was registered at the beginning of May and a mailshot sent out towards the end of the month. Our first significant report was received mid-July. This provides the following information:

- thirty people have already signed up to this way of giving;
- seventeen of these have agreed to the inflationary increase which will cut down the need to keep revisiting giving. You will be given 30 days notice of an inflationary increase and will be able to let the PGS know if you are unable to meet it.
- Eighteen of the people signed up do not currently give by standing order so this will cut down the amount of envelope giving and make life easier for Richard Fletcher our cashier. It also means that we are receiving support from people still unable to come to church and not giving by standing order.

We receive the monthly donations on 10th of the month and the gift aid on the next day thus giving us a considerable cashflow advantage since we normally receive gift aid for the year the following February.

If you have not already signed up you can do so by ringing 0333 002 1271 and someone from PGS (Parish Giving Scheme) will contact you to help you set a direct debit and gift aid. You may not get through straight away, but you can leave a message and they will get back to you. Our Parish Code is at the bottom of this article. Alternatively I have a copy of the mail shot which I can either scan and email to you or give you in hard copy. Don't be embarrassed to come forward if you have mislaid the original. I do that sort of thing all the time! If you are not coming to church, you can contact me on Henley 578998 or email kathryn.turner266@btinternet.com.

Parish code: 27062717

Dating of the Chantry House

Thanks to the work of Dr Dan Miles, who uses a technique known as dendro chronology, we now know the date of the construction of the Chantry House. The year is 1461, and the context is the "War of the Roses"; Edward IV has just come to the throne, bringing a short-lived peace. Documents show that in 1445 the merchants John Elmes and John Devene bought a building and vacant plot to the east of the church, and it seems highly probably that this vacant plot was the land on which the Chantry House was built. This mercantile connection, together with the location, with a lower-ground floor opening onto the river (then somewhat wider than it is now) downstream of the bridge, suggests that it was built as a warehouse and trading floor. In the sixteenth century it became a school.

The dating was organised and funded by the Henley Archaeological and Historical Group, with a grant from SODC arranged by Councillor Kellie Hinton.

From the Director of Music

We were delighted that the choir were allowed to start again in September. It has taken some time getting used to our new positions (with the distancing) but lots of improvements have been made. We have retained our Choral Scholars and appointed Joe Croton. We have also introduced new singers to our junior choir, The Melody Makers.

I am extremely pleased to report that Freddie Lee has won a place at Royal Holloway to study music. He will sing in the chapel choir there and return to us during the university holidays.

I have appointed Gary Owens to tune and maintain the organ at Henley. This is a significant job and I hope that in due course, an organ report will be done so that we can plan for the future. Organs always need tlc and with the lack of heating during the winter months, I hope this hasn't damaged anything. However, we now have a world class organ builder looking after our precious instrument.

Finally, please note the new time for choral evensong of 4pm. Why, I hear you ask? In order for there to be less "hanging around" between services for a number of us that live a fair distance away, we have decided to bring the service half an hour earlier. I hope to see you at the next one!

Sebastian Thomson
Director of Music



Gardening October 2020

<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AN5uwW4g9ugm%2DsE&cid=4BB3E8FC6A22EF1E&id=4BB3E8FC6A22EF1E%212671&parId=4BB3E8FC6A22EF1E%21141&o=OneUp>

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, then thank the Lord: Hymn 262 NEH

And what gifts they are. Harvest festival was subdued but still had the joy of the harvest and goods that we are given. It is incredible to think that we are nearly in October but when I go down the garden every morning to let the chickens out there is a noticeable nip in the air. The sultry days of summer are still hanging onto the afternoons, but mornings and evenings are being overtaken. The garden is still thriving and I am lifting much of the summer and early autumn crops like carrots, beans, beetroot and some cabbages. It is a hectic time blanching and freezing, scrubbing and drying or pickling and bottling but it is the payday of another year's work. I am already planning next years crops and will try growing ginger in the greenhouse as it is supposed to thrive in our summers. However, the sweet peas will have to be planted in their loo tubes next week as they like a long season and long roots to thrive next year. The garlic is in the fridge and will be put in the freezer overnight before being planted out on the first of October. If they don't get a bite of cold, and there is no guarantee of that with the weather, they don't thrive and tend to grow like an onion rather than splitting into cloves. The silly heat chillies have finally begun to grow bigger and ripen and the capsicums are prolific but they will freeze very well without going soggy so no problem there. The winter veg are digging in for the next few months of cold and wet but they stay fresh without preserving so it is good to grow in succession to have a continuous supply. They tend to be of the cabbage and onion families with swedes and a few late varieties of carrots, but much can be grown in the greenhouse. I have a tub of potatoes hopefully growing for Christmas. I haven't bothered with them before as we normally have enough stored in the shed in sacks but it seemed like a god idea. I love going down the garden on Christmas eve and digging up the veg for Christmas dinner, it has become a bit of a ritual now. Parsnips, carrots, brussels, kale, swede and now new potatoes must be good and worth the effort. I keep telling Sheila we should get a turkey to go in with the chickens then we can have the whole meal from the garden. She did mention the stuffing so maybe we will get a pig. Life is always fun in the garden and as ever you are always welcome to visit as we have space to distance and drink tea. I am now on my eighth video so just ask if you want a copy. Keep deadheading and look to the future. Keep safe and keep happy.

Dave and Sheila Croton



Notices

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The APCM for St Mary's will be held in church on Sunday 11th October at 11am. Elections for Churchwardens (2), PCC members (8) and Deanery Reps (3) will need to take place. If you wish to volunteer for any of these posts please complete and return the appropriate form from Sue Hockley or Sheila Croton. You need to be on the electoral roll to be eligible. You will also be required to do Safeguarding Training. If there are more applications than posts there will need to be a vote for that particular position. Please check that your name is on the electoral roll because if it is not you will not be able to vote. You can get an Electoral Application form from Sheila or Sue but it must be returned by 21st September. Please can all reports for church activities be emailed to Julie in the office.

Macmillan Raffle

Due to your exceptional generosity I am delighted to report that we raised the magnificent sum of £420 (+ some gift aided donations).

The Junior Church Team drew the raffle before their meeting on Tuesday 29th September. The lucky winners are:-

1st Prize – A Food Hamper – Moira Mears

2nd Prize – Wine and Chocolate – Sheila Croton

3rd Prize – A Nivea Pamper Hamper – Maria Clarke

4th Prize – A Relaxation Pamper Hamper – Christine Wanjeru

5th Prize – 'Keeping in Touch' Hamper – Pauline Lester

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to this wonderful cause. Hopefully, things will be back to some sort of normality next year and we can meet to enjoy coffee, cake and conversation once more.



Food Bank

Although we cannot bring donations to church at this time, please continue to support the Food Bank.

The supermarkets have donation points and you can also donate to NOMAD online:

www.nomadhenley.co.uk.

Thank you.

Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord,

We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship,

and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen

You can join the midday prayers, Monday to Saturday, live on the Mothers Union Facebook page.

The Children's Society Collection Boxes

We are looking for someone new to take on The Children's Society Collection Boxes. The Society are a joy to work with, in a way that best suits the volunteers. Our thanks go to Inez Hemsley who has kindly been organising the boxes but would now like to stand down. People take a collection box home for a year, which can begin any time. Inez has been collecting the boxes back in during the autumn, so the money can be counted before Christmas. The congregation are good at returning them!

If you are interested, please speak to Inez in church or call her on 576242.

HGVs in Henley

Some of you are very likely already aware of the new campaign to stop HGVs using Henley as a short cut. There are concerns about pollution, damage to the historic bridge, and the safety of other road-users. From a church point-of-view, heavy vehicles passing our ancient church, sometimes at considerable speed, cannot be doing our fragile fabric any good, and the noise is disruptive to our services, especially as we are now making greater use of the Jesus Chapel. Please consider whether you would like to sign the petition: <https://www.change.org/p/oxfordshire-county-council-traffic-regulation-order-to-ban-hgvs-who-short-cut-through-henley>. You might also consider writing to the local MP and our County Councillor.

Concert



CHILTERN ARTS ANNOUNCES LIVE, SOCIALLY-DISTANCED AUTUMN CONCERTS IN HENLEY AND BERKHAMSTED

Following a long summer of churches and concert venues staying silent in the wake of Covid-19, Chiltern Arts is joining the organisations slowly braving the return to live music and has confirmed it will be presenting two, live, socially-distanced concerts in October this year. Both concerts were originally planned for September, but various Covid-related problems have meant a reschedule and, for one concert, a relocation. Careful planning and close liaison with venues has allowed these two events to take place – and Chiltern Arts hopes to welcome as many people as is safely possible to rejoice in this renewed luxury of live music.

On **Monday 5th October at St Mary's Church in Henley-on-Thames at 6pm**, violinist Fenella Humphreys is joined by Murray Grainger (accordion), Ben Griffiths (double bass) and George Barton (percussion) for the world premiere of a reworking of Vivaldi's Four Seasons, bringing a whole new world of diverse and brilliant sounds to this baroque masterpiece.

On Tuesday 6th October The Gatsby in Berkhamsted hosts an early return of Chiltern Arts' highly successful concert and dinner event, with the Consone Quartet (the first period instrument quartet to be selected as BBC Radio 3 New Generation artists) performing much-loved string quartets by Schubert and Beethoven. Tickets for this event include a glass of fizz, canapés and a two-course meal in fabulous art deco surroundings.

Two, unforgettable evenings await – the joy of sharing live music together after so long is something we have been longing to experience again for six long months. Now you can – right on your doorstep.

Tickets are available at chilternarts.com and start at £24. For further information please contact Naomi Taylor: naomi.taylor@chilternarts.com / 07943875640

Would you like to help a young, aspiring athlete studying Elite Sports at Henley?

The Henley College is looking for local families to host 16-18 year old male students taking the Elite Rugby Sports Programme on a term-time basis in the forthcoming academic year. Being a host family is a fantastic way to supplement your income whilst providing a really rewarding experience. You could be supporting a sports star of the future! If you are interested in this opportunity, please email gweb@henleycol.ac.uk or fphe@henleycol.ac.uk for more information.

Rector

The Revd Jeremy Tayler
rector.hwr@btinternet.com

Churchwardens

Robin Hartley
07398152388
Sue Hockley
01491-575896

Treasurer

Kathryn Turner
01491-577340

PCC Secretary

Sheila Croton
07460535793
Email: sac2801@btinternet.com

Organist

Sebastian Thomson
07739 712783

Tower Captain

Joan Bennett
01491 579575

Mothers' Union

Parish Office

01491 577340

Planned Giving

(envelope scheme)
Martin Whittaker
01491 572228

Secretary

Julie Griffin
01491 577340
Email:
office.hwr@btinternet.com
(Mon. & Tues. 9.30-12.30,
Weds. & Fri. 9.30-4.30)

Advertising

Parish Office
01491-577340

Publishing

Alan Tang
E-Mail: alan.tang8@btinternet.com