

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Weston-super-Mare



WINTER NEWSLETTER

2020



‘Anxious thoughts may fill my heart,
but thy presence is my joy and my
consolation’. Psalm 94:19

Dear friends in Christ, if you were to ask which phrases have been heard most of all during this past year, the winners would surely be, ‘In these strange/unprecedented times’ and ‘When this is all over...’.

2020 has been a unique year, and one which many will want to put behind them; a year of restrictions, uncertainty, and, for many, grief, financial worry and the sorrow of separation from those we love. Alongside all this there has been a sense of global instability and division, with the US election and widespread political upheaval. There’s been a disturbing level of polemic and conflict underlying anxiety about the pandemic, which hopefully will lessen with the arrival of the vaccination programme.

Here at All Saints we enjoyed a brief return to near normality in the last few months, with Mass each Sunday, albeit socially distanced and masked. What a delight it was to hear Gordon singing the Gospel acclamation once again, and some of our most loved hymns being sung from the Lady Chapel by our choir cantors.

We were also very fortunate to be able to celebrate our Patronal Festival on Sunday 1st November just before the second lockdown, and to hear Father Andrew Allen – at Father Andrew’s invitation preach on sainthood. And for the first time since March our choir was able to sing together again, which felt like a joyful reunion. We missed the conviviality of our Bring and Share lunch, but there was a real sense of joy amongst our congregation, alongside the poignant remembrance of ‘absent friends’: those still having to shield at home.

The following day, All Souls' Day, Father Andrew and Janice paid tribute to our departed loved ones by reading out their names in the silence of a sunlit church, and this was followed by a beautifully peaceful celebration of the Mass.



For many this second lockdown has been harder than the first. The initial national spirit of togetherness and co-operation seems to have lessened, and with the dark evenings and winter creeping in it has sometimes been hard to keep positive. The renewed suspension of church services from the 5th November was a further setback, but thankfully some of us have been able to pray and reflect in the serenity of our beloved church on a Saturday morning, a time spent alone with God which has never failed to comfort and console.

And in the background, as always, the work goes on; we're grateful for the pew sheets sent out by Terry, the hymns from Philip, Gordon's singing on You Tube, and Janice's constant care of our church. Phone calls are still being made to keep our people connected and cared for, and at this time prayer feels more needed than ever.

Hopefully we will be meeting again as an Advent congregation, looking forward to the nativity of Jesus and the coming of Christ into our lives; looking to the light in the darkness. We have hope, and we have our faith to sustain us in anxious times. May God protect and bless each one of us this Christmas.

Gordon Pullin continues to record hymns in his music room and these are uploaded to our All Saints YouTube site

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9NE6sJD5_oaNbtO81C28sA/videos

St Saviour's hall reopened with a Dance group on September 7th then the Theatre group restarted on Sat 26th September. Costanzi started rehearsing in church every Monday from 7th Sept and Weston Choral began rehearsals in church from Tues 6th Oct. During this period, we even managed to have two recording sessions. However, the 2nd lockdown put an end to this activity.

The communication routes set up by key members of the PCC have continued. Every week a pew sheet is available with the Sunday readings, Gospel and prayers, this also contains news from the parish. It is sent out on email and hardcopies are also distributed.



Sadly, Advent will commence during this 2nd lockdown, we have a special Christmas Newsletter that will include Christmas greetings, much like the Anchor would do at this time of year.

The Diocese Manna magazine is now only available as an electronic version, if anyone wants a copy please let Terry know.

We will continue to keep the risk assessments up to date reflecting our practical experience and ensuring compliance with Church of England and Government guidelines.

*In the tender mercy of our God,
The dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
To give light to those who dwell in darkness
And in the shadow of death,
And to guide our feet into the way of peace.*