

Hullbridge, Rawreth, Rettendon Churches Newsletter November/December - 2021

www.facebook.com/groups/hrr.churches

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd Richard Jordan

Tel: 01268 766565 e-mail: rev.richard.jordan@gmail.com Web address: www.hrr-churches.org.uk/

Rev Brenda Wallace Tel: 01268 907535 e-mail: brenda.wallace93@outlook.com

Church Wardens

St Thomas of Canterbury Hullbridge:

Mark Bodey Tel: 01702 231570 and Sarah Brewer Tel: 01702 231749

St Nicholas Rawreth: Heather Love Tel: 01268 734970 and Helen Stacey Tel: 01702 233400

All Saints Rettendon: Gale Fogg Tel: 07736 108048

Newsletter Editor: Christine Holmes e-mail: christine@davidholmes.plus.com

November is the cruelest month Reminiscence forced of things far gone and Bitter foreshadowing of what is to come. (Jamie Moore)

Jamie Moore's poem about November seems to sum up what most of us feel – as the weather gets colder, the evenings get darker, the trees lose their leaves, and rain is a frequent visitor. You can read the full poem here: <https://hellopoetry.com/poem/904561/november-is-the-cruelest-month/>

In the church calendar, November begins with two festivals which seem to tie in with that sense of sadness and an ending. All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day remind us of those who have gone before us in the way of faith. The saints include a wide variety of people – from writers, preachers, missionaries, and Bishops, through to the many martyrs who lost their lives, often in cruel and violent ways, through staying faithful to God. On All Souls' day we remember our own loved ones who have gone before us, a time both to give thanks for their lives but also to grieve their loss. So the month begins with sadness and the shadow of death.

Two weeks later, we commemorate Remembrance Sunday, remembering and giving thanks for those who lost their lives in war, with a particular focus on men and women in the forces who died in service to their country. As the number of people who were alive during the war diminishes with the passing of time, perhaps we can see these as purely historical events, which have less impact on us. But recent events in

Afghanistan remind us that the violence of oppression continues to threaten the lives both of service personnel and their civilian co-workers. War is never far away in so many places round the world, and Remembrance Sunday calls us not just to recollect the past, but to pray and work for peace, harmony and justice in our troubled world.

At the end of the month, though we move into Advent in preparation for Christmas. The season of Advent is about more than a daily taste of chocolate, but in Church focuses on deeper themes of hope, joy and expectation as we look towards our celebrations of the birth of Jesus, God's great gift to humanity born in the humility of the Bethlehem stable.

Our church year moves through cycles – from sadness to joy – time and time again. And that is a reflection of our own lives – where times of desolation and despair can move into times of consolation and joy, as St. Ignatius reminds us. This past year has had a great many challenges and times of desolation for everyone, but among that there have been moments of encouragement as people have shown new levels of care and support for neighbours and friends.

We don't know at present what this Christmas will bring – there is still uncertainty as the virus continues to make an impact on our everyday lives. So I invite you to hold on to the Advent hope, and to seek Christ's light and presence with

us even in the darker and more difficult times. May God's grace surround, sustain and inspire you through these months of winter, and help you to look forward to new joys and new possibilities in the days ahead.

Brenda Wallace

Church Services

We hold Morning Prayer each weekday morning and compline each weekday evening.

Morning Prayer - 8.00am

Compline/Night Prayer - 8.00pm

you can join us by joining our Facebook group www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches.

Our Eucharist/Holy Communion services are on Sunday mornings. These are held at the following times:

St Thomas Hullbridge 9.30am

St Nicholas Rawreth. 10.00am

All Saints Rettendon 11.15am

These services are live streamed and once again you can join us by joining our Facebook group -

www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches.

You can now download the order of service for Eucharist/Holy Communion that we will be using from our webpage:

hrr-churches.org.uk/prayer-and-reflection/

You will also find the Collects and Readings there for each Sunday too.

Remembrance Day Service - 14th November

Our Remembrance Day Services will be held at the following times:

St Thomas Hullbridge - time to be announced

St Nicholas Rawreth 10.30am

All Saints Rettendon. 10.50am

Bereavement Group at St Nicholas

The Bereavement Group will meet in St Nicholas Church on Thursday 25th November and Thursday 30th December at 2-3.30pm and we are now able to have refreshments. All are welcome.

For more information contact Pat on 07790 460026 or Helen on 07880 728560.

Rawreth Ladies Club Meetings

The meetings have been suspended due to Covid-19 for information as to when they will re-open contact Sue Merton Tel: 01268 561703.

Rawreth District Council

For up-to-date information, contacts and telephone numbers visit their website: www.rawrethparishcouncil.co.uk/ or contact the Clerk Hayley Bloomfield

Tel 07773 952455. or e-mail clerk.rawrethparishcouncil@btinternet.com

Rawreth Village Hall Bookings

For Village Hall bookings contact Dave Collins Tel: 01268 734933 or e-mail daveicollins40@gmail.com

Rettendon and Battlesbridge Newsletter

Dear Reader,

Another full month of news, views and events. Starting with the Country and Western, Col's Country Club, back for a live music session.

Then, of course, Remembrance day. This year marks the 100th birthday of the Royal British Legion so we hope you will support them continuing to uphold their remit of helping those of our armed forces who have become disabled – mentally as well as physically, out of work, homeless, etc. through no fault of their own. Perhaps difficult to think of veterans being of any age, but they are, with people of 18 to over 100 being helped.

The Christmas Bazaar is back at All Saints' Church. Come for lunch and to look around.

Those of you interested to find out about the Horticultural Society, we have our AGM in the Memorial Hall. We are very friendly and welcoming.

The link for the newsletter is:-

<https://e-voice.org.uk/retbatnews/assets/documents/issue401-november>

We hope you enjoy it.

Lastly: we encourage items from groups and individuals and try and fit something in from all who send to us (providing it is accurate), though space may be limited.

Please let me know if you do not want to receive this newsletter anymore.

Your name and email address will be held only for distributing this newsletter, or associated documents – e.g. Horticultural Society schedules. **Rettendon and Battlesbridge old Newsletter**

Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/retbatnews/>

Your faithfully
Barbara Wright

HRR Churches Newsletter

If you know of someone who would like a copy of our Newsletter please forward their e-mail address to me christine@davidholmes.plus.com and I will send them a copy.

Likewise if you do not wish to receive a copy of the Newsletter please forward your email address to me and I will take you off the circulation list.

Christine

Memorial Service for Margaret Purvis

The Memorial Service for Margaret is on Sunday 28th November at 2.30 for the burial of ashes, followed by the Memorial Service in St Nicholas Church and then refreshments in the Village Hall.

Anyone who knew Margaret and would like to come will be very welcome.

A Christmas 'DO' at St Nicks

on

Sunday 12th December 2.30-4.30pm

As Good as New stall

(bring and buy - no clothing please)

Cakes and Raffle stalls

Come and enjoy a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine

A cup of tea or coffee and a piece of cake

£3.50

All money raised goes to St Nicholas Church

St Nicholas Toy Service
Sunday 5 December - 10.00am

Today we remember St Nicholas who was known for his generosity:
Please bring new toys for distribution (unwrapped) to the needy in the community.
All are welcome

Christmas Services

Carols by Candlelight
at
St Nicholas

Sunday 18th December
4.00pm
at
St Nicholas

HRR Christmas Services

Friday 24th December - Christmas Eve - Midnight Mass

St Thomas Hullbridge. - 11.30pm

St Nicholas Rawreth. - 11.30pm

All Saints Rettendon. - 11.30pm

Monday 25th December - Christmas Day

St Nicholas Rawreth. - 10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 26th December

No Morning Service at St Nicholas Rawreth and All Saints Rettendon

St Thomas Hullbridge. - 9.30am Eucharist

These services are live streamed and you can join us by joining our Facebook group - www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches.

Or alternatively you can download the order of service for Eucharist/Holy Communion that we will be using from our webpage: hrr-churches.org.uk/prayer-and-reflection/

Animal Blessing Service at St Nicholas

The Animal Blessing Service held on 3rd October went very well, ten dogs brought their owners along and both animals and humans were very well behaved.

During the service two hymns were sung and prayers said for our animals who give us such unconditional love. We also remembered those animals who are not so fortunate.

Christine

“Have you and your family become interested in gardening lately.

Do you need some helpful advice?

Or perhaps just some useful tips from other amateur gardeners.

RETTENDON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

have free membership this year so now is the time to join us and find out what we do. Although there may be restrictions we have planned a full itinerary of shows, talks, plant sales and coach trips.

If you would like to join us please contact

Beryl on 01268 766221, John on 01268 562371 or Barbara on 01245 321554,
or email RetHSsec@gmail.com.

Our website is <https://e-voice.org.uk/rethortsoc/>”



St. Nicholas CofE Primary School,
Priory Chase, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 9NE.
Working with Canewdon Endowed (CofE) VC Primary School

Tel: 01268 786 874 E-mail admin@rawreth.essex.sch.uk
www.stnicholassch.co.uk

Two schools collaborating through education to bring success to pupils, families and staff.



Executive Headteacher: Mrs S. Willis BA (Hons) NPQH Executive Assistant Headteacher: Mr N. Jones BEd (Hons)

October 2021

Dear Friends,

On my drive into school I was thinking that I can't believe it is Harvest time already. We have had our Harvest Festival Assembly and the lovely donations we received from our school community were delivered to HARP in Southend to support the homeless and those suffering hardship.

We have managed to have 2 Open Days this term for parents who are considering our school for their children due to start next September, and it was lovely to meet parents in person and for our children to be able to show them round our school. We have been working hard on our school environment and developing displays around the school to show what we have been learning.

As a school we all walked up to Rawreth Lane on Thursday 7th October to watch the stage 4 of The Women's Cycle Race and it was fantastic, the children really enjoyed cheering on the women as they cycled past us.

I look forward to writing again soon.

Mrs S Willis

Executive Headteacher

Bell Ringing At All Saints' Church, Rettendon

We have been lucky to ring for some notable dates during the past year or so, VE day, VJ day, tolling for Captain Tom Moore, and for Prince Philip, although limited to 3 bells due to social distancing. Now we have started to ring again at church for the service, still a bit limited. However, as we move further out of lockdown we are again starting to practice on a Wednesday evening (8pm). We do have one small problem - the number of ringers we have, being further depleted by age and infirmity.

Hence the plea here for more people to come forward. We can teach you and it is a lovely hobby. Bell ringing involves technique more than muscles, though these may help, and an attentive mind. In fact it may keep your mind active as you learn the different methods and call changes, some very elaborate, to make tunes with the bells.

If you are interested please get in touch with Barbara Wright, 01245 321554,
or Hazel Dale-Evans, 01245 401538

Rettendon Primary School Main Road, Rettendon Common, Chelmsford

I have to say that this half term has flown by. Since getting our school fully open with more normal guidelines the children have been so busy. It's been an absolute joy to have whole school assemblies again and allow children in different year groups to share lunchtimes with each other.

We have been able to hold some small local trips, hold parents workshops on site and toward the end of September held a wonderful after school "Inflatables Event" in glorious autumn evening weather. A crowded field and the smell of hot dogs and burgers was a real thrill and raised some much needed funds for the Friends of Rettendon group.

A date for your diary would be our Christmas Fayre which we are hoping to hold on site with a variety of stall holders and refreshments. This will be on Tuesday 30th November at 3.30pm – If you want to know more, or fancy having a stall of your own, do get in touch with our office.

This term we have welcomed several new staff into the school community as well as all our lovely new Reception children and their families. It's been brilliant to watch them settle into a more normal school community, after the last couple of academic years.

Thanks for all the kind thoughts and comments over the past months.

Phil Andrews
Deputy Headteacher

Psalm 84

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

My soul has a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

- 2 The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young:
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
- 3 Blessed are they who dwell in your house:
they will always be praising you.
- 4 Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion,
- 5 Who going through the barren valley find there a spring,
and the early rains will clothe it with blessing.
- 6 They will go from strength to strength, and appear before God in Zion.
- 7 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; listen, O God of Jacob.
- 8 Behold our defender, O God, and look upon the face of your anointed.
- 9 For one day in your courts is better than a thousand.
- 10 I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of ungodliness.
- 11 For the Lord God is both sun and shield; he will give grace and glory;
no good thing shall the Lord withhold from those who walk with integrity.
- 12 O Lord God of hosts, blessed are those who put their trust in you.



Birds sheltering in the wall of the Temple mount, Jerusalem

The further we get into this series of reflections on the psalms, the more we find repetitions of themes and ideas. This is especially true in this favourite psalm – psalm 84. In it we hear the theme of longing for God that we had in psalm 42; the waterless valley from psalm 23, and the provision of water as a symbol of God’s provision for us from both of those psalms.

In psalm 84, the longing for God focuses on the longing to be in God’s presence by coming into his temple – the place where, uniquely, God was considered to be present in the Old Testament. The writer longs and pines to be in the courtyard of the temple – for only the priests were allowed into the inner parts of the temple. The temple is a place where everyone is welcome to come and find God – even the birds have a place there. This is interesting, given that certainly by New Testament times the temple had clearly defined areas beyond which certain people

could not pass: Gentiles and women had designated areas with barriers keeping them further away from the temple, yet the birds could fly everywhere! The temple is a place dwelling and of refuge – ‘happy are those whose refuge is in you’; it is a place where even the shortest amount of time is worthwhile: ‘one day in the temple is worth a thousand elsewhere’; and it is better to be a door-keeper at the temple – the most lowly of jobs – than being in the dwellings of wicked people. And the temple is a place of pilgrimage – where the sense of longing draws people to make the journey to travel and to find God there.

This psalm clearly appears to be a psalm in honour of the Jerusalem temple – the place where the Ark of the Covenant, containing the tablets of the ten commandments given to Moses – were taken in triumphant procession by David from Kiryat Yearim to the east of Jerusalem. It was the focus of the cultic life of the Jewish people from its initiation by David, its grand building by Solomon, its restoration after the exile in Babylon, and its grandiose embellishment by Herod just before New Testament times. It was the place where Jesus himself was so drawn – even as a child. It was the place where he condemned corruption by turning out the moneychangers. And it was the place which the Romans finally destroyed in 70AD as a symbol of their attempts to finally destroy the power this great focus of the Jewish people.

It is considered probable this psalm was written at an early date – celebrating the early years of the temple and David’s triumphal procession there with the ark, as we also find in Psalm 122. That same sense of the joy of the pilgrimage to visit the house of God is found in Isaiah (30.29) ‘You shall have a song as in the night when out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of the LORD’. But equally it could have been written much later, during the exile, when the people of Israel longed so desperately to be back in their home land and their own place of worship, as we will find in Psalm 137. We really do not know. Whichever is the case, the sense of longing to be in God’s house and to come into his presence is so powerful in this psalm – to make the pilgrimage to be in the place where the living God is encountered and where the psalmist’s whole being cries out with joy to be present.

The sense of longing and of pilgrimage is something that perhaps we have lost. Do we long to come to Church or to any other place where we find ourselves close to God? Would we rather spend a day in Church than a thousand days in our own home? Would we rather spend our life by the church door welcoming visitors than spend days at Lakeside or in the pub?

Are our churches a place of refuge, of joy and of renewal? Do we think of how lovely our churches are? All these are phrases the psalmist uses of the Temple – do we feel the same way about our own churches?

I so often hear people say ‘what a lovely church you have here’. That mostly comes from occasional visitors – wedding and baptism congregations for example, rather than regular members of the congregation. I suppose that is partly because of the historic interest, the ‘quaint old England’ quality of our English Country churches. But perhaps it is also because there people feel that – in some way they cannot explain – they can find an encounter with God.

It would be an interesting exercise to re-write the psalm, putting the name of our Church in place of the references to the Jerusalem temple – and seeing how it sounds to us – whether it rings true. Equally it would be an interesting exercise to put ourselves in the place of the psalmist – to ask ourselves whether we truly long to make the journey to come to God’s house, whether we long to be in his presence – or whether we’d rather be tucked up at home with a cup of tea and Coronation Street.

That sense of a longing journey towards God is something which – hopefully – pervades all of our lives – each day we live is a day to draw closer to God – to learn more of God’s ways – to mould ourselves more closely to God’s will. Each day is a day to long for God’s presence, to come to God whether physically in the church or spiritually in our hearts. For that journey towards God and towards God’s presence, which our lives are about, is above all a preparation for that final journey when we will come to see God face to face: and that promise is also in this psalm – that God bestows upon us grace and honour, and withholds nothing from those who live a blameless life – that is a life in which we seek to live according to God’s will and purposes for us. Our journey in this life is a journey towards God and with God – and the goal and end of our journey is to find God waiting for us with open and loving arms.

Brenda Wallace

Revd. Brenda Wallace

Associate Priest, Hullbridge, Rawreth and Rettendon

*Common Worship: Daily Prayer, material from which is included here,
is copyright © The Archbishops’ Council 2005 and published by Church House Publishing.*