

There is a lovely prayer which features at the beginning of collective worship at Great Paxton School.
We could make these words our special prayer for this season of All Saints and All Souls:

**Jesus said, I am The Light of The World.
Help us to shine like a light, that in the warmth of our love, people
may be cheered and comforted. Amen.**

Sunday November 1st, 2020

Little Paxton Church

9.15am – 9.45am: Holy Communion

3.00pm The Annual Service for All Souls.

Great Paxton Church

10.30am – 11.00am: Morning Prayer

Remembrance Sunday, November 8th

**10.40am: Outdoors Service of Remembrance
in Great Paxton churchyard**

3.00pm: Remembrance Service in Little Paxton Church

**5.00pm: Remembrance Service in Southoe Church, remembering
those from Southoe and Diddington who died in the service of their
country.**

A Collect for All Saints' Day.

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
Amen.

For a time of reflection.

Saints are people through whom the light of God shines.

Who do we know who matches this description?

In what ways can we reflect God's light and love more brightly?

FOUR

**The Benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe
Sunday November 1st, 2020
All Saints' Day
"Keeping in Touch" Edition 32**



Annette writes,

Greetings Everyone!

This weekend, Hallowe'en falls on Saturday October 31st and All Saints' Day on Sunday November 1st. November 2nd brings us All Souls' Day – or to give it the more formal ecclesiastical heading: The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed.

Forgive me for being a party pooper, but I don't much like the commercial side of Hallowe'en and the images and products that are promoted to offer kids a spooky thrill. Some of the older traditions like apple bobbing and carving pumpkins and putting a light inside are fun; anything to do with bringing a light touch into our lives has got to be good. This year many of the social events which go with Hallowe'en will be curtailed due to Covid, but I hope that we all can think about some very safe candle lighting at home and maybe carving a pumpkin with a nice smiley face.

I will reflect some more on this season on page 3, but this time of year has always been about remembering and looking back. Giving thanks for saints of old and current day saints; people through whom the light of God shines and who make it easier for others to believe in God. A time as well to give thanks for our loved ones who we miss so much and who shared their light and love with us.

Keep well and keep safe

With love and prayers, Annette. 01480 211048.

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ONE

Readings for All Saints Day Revelation Chapter 7 v 9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white.

They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!'

And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,

singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?'

I said to him, 'Sir, you are the one that knows.'

Then he said to me, 'These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

Matthew Chapter 22:34-36

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

TWO

Reflections from Annette

Back in 835 AD the then Pope, Gregory 1V, decreed that the Feast of All Saints be observed on November 1st. This would follow The Eve of All Hallows (an old name for Saints) on October 31st – and that is where the name Hallowe'en derives from.

Festivities on October 31st had ancient pre-Christian Celtic origins and the date was regarded as the last night of the Celtic year, when all kinds of supernatural beings, good and not so good, were thought to be abroad. Feasts were held in memory of those who had died and people dressed up in costumes to hide from any malevolent forces, carrying candles inside turnips to ward off darkness.

When the pope in the 9th century introduced the Feast of All Saints on November 1st, he was steering the church away from pagan associations and introducing a season of honouring Christian saints, many of whom had suffered for their faith and were regarded as martyrs. November 2nd, All Souls, also became a day of remembering all those who had departed this life.

It is easy to think of saints as figures in stained glass windows who have led exemplary lives. Some Christian traditions pay great respect to saints of old and those who in our contemporary world shine as outstanding followers of Christ. But in the early church, St Paul and others referred to one another as "*holy ones*". The Greek word used is '*hagios*' and it is that word which was translated into Latin as '*sanctus*' and from that Latin word comes 'saint'.

St Paul understood the word as applying to **all** followers of Jesus Christ, the church as a whole. It was only later that it referred to those who had been martyred for their faith or lived a life of outstanding holiness.

Perhaps one of the best blueprints for how to live a faithful life following Jesus is to read the beatitudes or blessings in Matthew Chapter 5. He tells us who God will particularly bless; maybe we can identify with some of the hallmarks of a faithful follower: peacemaker, seeker after goodness and justice, those who are pure in word and deed.

And whilst we don't walk around with glowing turnips and more, pumpkins with a candle burning brightly can remind us that one way to think about saints is to say that they are people through whom the light of God shines.

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THREE

