

**All Saints and All Souls**  
**Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022**



Dear Friends in Christ,

***‘Do to others as you would have them do to you.’*** (Luke 6: 31)

As we come to the end of October (and quite HOW did the year fly past this fast!!), our thoughts turn more fully to a season of thanksgiving and remembrance. At All Souls, we reflect on the lives of our loved ones who have died; sharing the preciousness of our reciprocal love, one for the other. In our mutual loss, so we gather together as we were made to do – seeking solace and finding God’s peace in each other. As we remember the people who have shaped our lives and light candles to kindle our souls with the warmth of their precious memory, we are brought close to their presence. I have mentioned before the sense of ‘thinness’ with which our ancestors held this season of intense light; as they too felt the presence of all those who had gone before them, and the power of their goodness.



***‘The Forerunners of Christ with Saints and Martyrs’ by Fra Angelico***

In the turmoil of our current political landscape (you simply couldn't make it up!), I was moved to hear Anne Widdicombe speak last weekend, as she gave a stark insight into the politics of a 'post-Christian world' in which people had lost sight of working for the good of the other, along with the values of faith, hope and love in the forgiveness and mercy of Christ's saving grace. Food for thought indeed!



***'Adoration of the Trinity' by Albrecht Dürer***

Yet each of us reading this, even though we often feel helpless in a world which seems as if it is spinning on a crazy axis, do carry these Christian values of love and forgiveness, of justice and mercy: of eternal life, together with all the saints who have gone before us into the joy and felicity of heaven. These are not mere words. These are gospel truths, made real by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we remember all those who have gone before us, so we must think of all those who are to come, for whom we will be their forerunners of the faith.

In our own time, we have the opportunity to share our faith in the gospels. We have the moral and spiritual template for future generations, and it is up to us, whether we wear clerical collars or not, to take the time to express our Christian values and instil them into the hearts of those around us, who will, in turn, guide and shape generations to come. Let us honour the forerunners and martyrs for Christ by carrying on their good works, doing to others as we would have them do unto us.

Yours, in the mercy of Christ,

Jax  
**Rector, The Downs Benefice**

On Tuesday of this week, at our online Benefice Zoom Morning Prayer, run by Charlotte Nash, Sue Simmonds from Chilbolton gave an edifying reflection on Christian forgiveness, and I am delighted that she has allowed me to share it with you here:

### Forgiveness – Sue Simmonds



My reflection for Morning Prayer is on forgiveness.

My interest in how people forgive was heightened by an article about forgiveness by Zoe Williams in the Guardian (09-08-22) after meeting Marina Cantacuzino, who has interviewed victims of the worst crimes imaginable to ask how they managed to pardon the perpetrators.

Marina set up the Forgiveness Project as a charity in 2004. She shared stories through it which she had received from her interviews. She recently published a book, *'Forgiveness: An Exploration.'* She found that there was no single answer to her questions. Marina says that some people cannot forgive and creating that expectation is unhelpful. Some can only partially forgive while others find complete peace when they have forgiven the most serious of crimes allowing them to get rid of the hate and move forwards in their lives.

Marina talks of Eva Mozes who survived, with her twin sister, notorious studies by Josef Mengele, a Nazi doctor at Auschwitz, who conducted medical experiments to satisfy his own curiosity. After years of silence, Eva sent a letter of forgiveness. She is quoted as saying 'I knew it would be a meaningful gift to myself as well, because in the writing I realised I was not the hopeless victim anymore'. Eva said that she was forgiving solely on her own behalf but she was reviled as much a traitor as hailed a peacemaker until her death in 2019. Marina says this is because many people argue that there are depths of human behaviour that should never be forgiven and some forms of forgiveness only lead to a cycle of abuse where the perpetrator feels no remorse.

Desmond Tutu says *'You can forgive and release or forgive and renew'* in other words don't hold the bitterness, but you can't forgive and carry on as before. Where does that leave us as Christians, followers of Christ?

Forgiveness, according to the bible, is correctly understood as God's promise not to count our sins against us. Biblical forgiveness requires repentance on our part (turning away from our old life of sin) and faith in Jesus Christ. We say The Lord's Prayer as part of our daily prayers. In it, we ask God's forgiveness for our wrongdoings where we have failed God and others and, as we receive forgiveness, we bring to mind anyone who we feel may have wronged us and forgive them. In the Apostles' Creed, we confirm that we believe in the forgiveness of sins. As followers of Christ, God wants us to know his forgiveness so we can forgive others.



***'Forgiveness' by Sofiya Inger***

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says *'For if you forgive others the wrongs they have done to you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you the wrongs you have done.'* It is the willingness to ask for forgiveness and change one's behaviour that is central to the idea of forgiveness.

I will end with a verse from Ephesians chapter 4:

*'Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you'*

**Sue Simmonds  
Chilbolton**

### **Collect Prayer 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,  
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.



### **Luke 6:20-31 - Love for Enemies**

Looking at his disciples, he said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

## Schedule of Services

Date	Ch	Cr	Li	Sp	Wh
30 <sup>th</sup> October	3pm – All Souls Service <i>(with Wherwell)</i>	Holy Communion		6pm - All Souls Service	<del>6pm – Autumn Meditations</del> Postponed owing to Covid
2 <sup>nd</sup> November			6pm - All Souls Service		
6 <sup>th</sup> November	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion with All Souls	4pm - Café Church – <i>in the Church Room</i>		
11 <sup>th</sup> November			10.55 am – Act of Remembrance – <i>at the War Memorial</i>		10.55 am – Act of Remembrance – <i>at the War Memorial</i>
13 <sup>th</sup> November	<i>(with Wherwell)</i>	10.55am – Remembrance Sunday Service – <i>at the War Memorial</i>	<i>Remembrance Service at the Barracks (time to be confirmed)</i>	10.55am – Remembrance Sunday Service	10.55am – Remembrance Sunday Service – <i>at the War Memorial (with Chilbolton)</i>
20 <sup>th</sup> November	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	6pm – Peace & Wholeness Service	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)	6pm - Autumn Meditations
23 <sup>rd</sup> November			Mid-week Holy Communion		
27 <sup>th</sup> November	5pm – Advent Meditation		11.15am - Patronal Festival with Commissioning of the Anna Chaplain	Morning Worship	8am – Holy Communion (BCP) PLUS 5.30pm – Advent Carol Service