



DECEMBER

2020



All Saints' Church
Preston on Tees

Jeremy Atkinson is one of the oldest members of our All Saints' Family, we asked him for his reflections on his time at All Saints'....

It was 50 years ago last July that the Atkinson family arrived on Yarm Road: Janet and me with our 6 children, the youngest, Charlotte, being only 3 months old. Maureen Stockley from next door was very quickly round with a tray of tea and we felt immediately at home.

Having both been at boarding schools where daily Chapel was a regular feature of life, we were communicant members of the Church of England from our 'teens. We had had 5 varied Parish Churches in our married life so were delighted to find that All Saints' was 'our sort of Church'.

It would seem very old fashioned now. There was 8am Communion every Sunday, from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and Morning and Evening services, with organ

and robed choir. Today's Common Worship was being developed.

Although friendly, it was all still quite formal: clergy robed correctly at all times and noisy children were sometimes frowned at.

Communications were via the monthly parish magazine, shared 50 years ago with Trinity Methodists and distributed free throughout the Parish. (Facebook was of science fiction).

Alongside the relative formality of services there was a lot of fun. Entertainment was not dominated by electronic media and we made our own – a production in Church of *The Zeal of Thy House* stands out, and there were several Feasts at Christmas with wine flowing, liberally but not excessively.

From time to time we had Parish or PCC Away Weekends at Minsteracres or St John's College to discuss the development of the parish.

So what has changed in 50 years? Almost everything, including much physical change culminating in ReACHE. The regular thanks and praise for God's presence in this place have not changed, and it is still 'my kind of church', and still 'home', but perhaps I have changed too?



Jeremy Atkinson

Advent

Are you planning to work your way through an Advent calendar this year? For many people that is an exercise in...eating chocolate (and trying to restrain themselves from opening more than one window at a time)! Windows 1-25 correspond to the first 25 days of December, ending up with the great day when we open presents, eat turkey and watch Christmas TV.

And there is nothing wrong with these glorious pleasures! BUT there is everything wrong with them if we forget the real meaning behind it all. The word Advent comes from Latin: it means Coming or Arrival.

At Christmas we celebrate Jesus' First Coming into the world. What a step down from the splendour of

heaven to the poverty, dirt and danger of his birth in Bethlehem! Advent actually begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas – which is in late November or early December, so not necessarily December 1st. We can use those four weeks for thinking, reading, praying and re-orientation so that the Lord has his proper place in our lives.

But Advent also looks forward to the Second Coming of Jesus – that great event which will be like lightning filling the whole sky and which will bring human history to a close. As we say in the Creed, "And he will come to judge the living and the dead".

No one knows when that great event will take place. It could be today; it could be next week; it could be 100 years away; but whenever it happens, we need to be ready. What difference would it make if we heeded those words of the old hymn?

"Redeem thy mis-spent time that's past,

And live this day as if thy last."

Advent is a good time for asking the Lord "What do you want me to do with the rest of my life – however long or short that may be?"



Andrew Killick

Parish Vacancy

October's programme contained an article about our current vacancy, since when there has been some further progress. Upon the completion of our parish profile and its approval by PCC, our two parish representatives (Lucy Falcus and Scott Linnett) had an online meeting with the St Mary's parish representatives (Cheryl Moore and Lewis Ayers). Thereafter our Archdeacon, Ven Rick Simpson, advised on the final text of the shared parish profile document.

We are most grateful to the Archdeacon for his assistance throughout our vacancy, and appreciate his final preparation of an advert, role description, and person specification. All this has now allowed the Diocese to begin advertising for a Priest-in-charge of All Saints' and St Mary's. The closing date for applications is 22 December, whilst interviews are scheduled for 28 January 2021.

As has been noted before the process of securing a new vicar is, first and foremost, a spiritual exercise. Though featuring many practical matters before the Bishop of Durham makes his appointment, the heart of this process is seeking the heart of God.

Thank you to each of you who, from the outset, have engaged prayerfully and offered wise counsel throughout this vacancy.

During these weeks of advertising when prospective candidates are giving consideration to our parish profile, please do continue to pray that the person God is calling to be our next vicar would apply. Please would you also pray for each of us involved in shortlisting candidates and subsequently interviewing them, that we would have divinely ordained clarity – even being able to echo words from the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) 'It seemed good to us and the Holy Spirit...' – as the Bishop of Durham then appoints our next vicar.

Thank you so much, and may God bless us all.



Scott Linnett
Parish Representative

So this is Christmas...

I wonder what is on your Christmas list?
I love giving and receiving presents!

As the year ticks over to 2021, I will begin my last month at All Saints before moving on placement to St Paul's with the team coming later. We can begin to put into action the months of planning, praying, building relationships. All because we want to know the gift that is best received in giving it away...

The gift of God, in the Holy Spirit, given to the Church at Pentecost, the gift that is always on the move. As we celebrate the gift of God in Jesus to us at

Christmas, we will share our experience of the amazing presence of God in the Spirit with our brothers and sisters at St Paul's so that, together we can gift it to the whole area!

So, if you want to help with this gift giving – pick a team member (or volunteer to be one) and pray for them.

These are the 21 people coming with us so far....

Paul, Liz, Evie, Bea and Toby Arnold;
Lorraine Tweddle;
Dunc and Deb Hird;
Fiona and Richard Spratt;
Geraldine and Philip Donegan;
Nicola Dursley;
Richard Warren;
Evelyn Leadbetter;
Tina Trotter;
Margaret Wright;
Nicola Wrightson;
Scott Linett;
Pamela McMullen;
Kath Snowdon.

Our vision is to be the beating heart of God's love for Stockton. We will do that by being a family of committed and audacious servants – who stay true to who God has made us, centred on who God is, and contribute to God's enterprise together, living this out where we are.

Being truly missional throughout the week, using the building as a hub for mission, that overflows into the community, a centre for life, worship and prayer that spills out over the whole of Stockton.

Practically, that means partnering with CAP, creative communities of mission, schools' outreach, café drop-ins, youth work, great worship. But above all it means sharing the gift we all have, the gift that is only received when it is given, the gift of Jesus Christ.

If you want to be a part of this, it is not too late, send me an email and let's meet up (over zoom or one to one): curatepaularnold.all saints@gmail.com



Paul Arnold
Planting Curate

What is Safeguarding in the Church?

I have been a Christian for over 37 years and in that time have served the church in a variety of ways.

When Jonathan and I came to All Saints' Church, in November 2016, we needed time to heal from past hurts. We found All Saints' to be a safe church with a culture of encouragement and support. Over time we began to become more involved. Earlier this year Jonathan became PCC secretary, and I felt called to take on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer that had become vacant.

When you hear the word 'Safeguarding' what do you think?
Initially, I thought 'keeping children and young people safe' and my mind went to those serious cases that have been in the media.

It is the action a Church takes to promote a safe culture. To be honest I didn't realise how extensive Safeguarding in the church is. We are a thriving church that reaches out into many communities and age groups and each needs to be considered when thinking about Safeguarding.

Biblical foundation to Safeguarding

We are called to work out our Christianity in our daily lives. It is the church's fundamental belief that Safeguarding in a Christian context is Gospel work - it is an expression of our love for God and each other, and in particular of our obedience to the command to 'Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before our God' (Micah 6:8).

Thus, Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility in All Saints' Church as we aim to develop a safe culture.

Concerns do not just need to be along the lines of those serious cases we see in the media where children or elderly have been abused. It could simply be concerning someone not coping physically, emotionally, mentally, or financially.

In the short time I have been in the role there has been a lot to read and learn and training to undertake. It has been a busy time! Please pray for me as I undertake this role.

If you have any concerns please contact me via safeguarding email:
safeguardingallsaintschurch@gmail.com



Diane Backhouse
Parish Safeguarding Officer

SUNDAYS DECEMBER 2020

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER

9am Holy Communion &

11am Morning Worship

Get Ready for Jesus: Make Way!

Isaiah 40:1-11, Luke 19.28-40

Speaker 9am Andrew Killick

Speaker 11am Amy Burns

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER

9am Morning Worship

11am Morning Worship

Get Ready for Jesus: Take Comfort!

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-end, John 1:6-8, 19-28

Speaker 9am & 11am Kathryn Belmont

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER

9am Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion

Get Ready for Jesus: Do not be Afraid

2 Samuel 7:1-11, Luke. 1:26-38

Speaker 9am & 11am Paul Arnold

**To book a seat for any of our services,
please call the Office on 01642 783814**

Tues-Thurs between 9.30-11.30.

DECEMBER SERMON SERIES:



"Get Ready for Jesus"

Our live streamed services and
any of our previous services
can be watched on You Tube
using this link:

<https://bit.ly/ASCYT>

MORNING PRAYER



**EVERY WEEKDAY VIA ZOOM please
contact the office if you would like
to join in by Zoom or phone.**

CHRISTMAS AT ALL SAINTS

Whilst we cannot all be together to celebrate Christmas this year, please join us online. [More details of all these services and the online links, will be added to our website: www.allsaints-church.net/christmas/ in due course.](#) Or you can phone the office for more details.

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 6pm, a pre-recorded Carol Service

CHRISTMAS EVE – a pre-recorded Nativity Story

CHRISTMAS EVE Midnight Communion – in the Church Building (you will need to book a seat)

CHRISTMAS DAY - a pre-recorded celebration

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER

A pre-recorded on-line service