

The Voice of St Paul's

November 2021

www.stpaulsheatonmoor.org



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Current Services at St Paul's

Sunday: 10.45am
1st Sunday
Family Service with
Communion

3rd Sunday:
Service of the Word

2nd & 4th Sundays:
Parish Eucharist

4th Sunday: **6.30pm**
Choral Evensong

Wednesday: 9.30am
Holy Communion.

For further details please
contact Revd. Liz 07763
188149

If there are people missing from church that might like a copy of the news sheet, a home visit or home communion then please let Liz, or one of the church wardens, know.

A Letter from Revd Liz Rowles

Dear Friends

I have a yearly struggle with Remembrance Day. Remembrance is one of those words that can send mixed messages. Why are we remembering? To be sad? To be thankful? In hope of a changed future? As a nation we are particularly good at Remembrance. But how do we use the 2 minutes silence?

I am fortunate to have been born after the second World War, but remember the sense of loss experienced by my family every year on Remembrance Day. At this time of year the church also celebrates All Saints Day and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed on All Souls Day. Both celebrate the mutual belonging, which is initiated through our Baptism.

All Saints Day celebrates people, through whose lives the whole Church has seen the grace of God powerfully at work.

All Souls gives the local community a chance to remember with thanksgiving before God, those with whom they have shared fellowship and faith, those who gave us life, those with whom we shared our lives or those who instructed us in the faith.

Remembrance is most often associated with the commemoration of Armistice Day on 11th November, or this year 14th November. (the nearest Sunday) We gather to give thanks for those who fight in wars so that we can enjoy our freedom. We will hear again the familiar words:

'They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old; age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them.'

Words which are familiar but still have immense power.

We will remember them.

It is right that Remembrance should come with mixed emotions. We look back with sadness and tears for those we have loved and lost. We look back with thankfulness for the time we shared with the Saints who have gone before who show us the way. We move forward in hope that the future may be different to the past, that the world may live in peace...

From the Register

Baptism:

October 3rd : Avani Tjituaija

October 24th: Cole Samuel
Jacklin

Wedding:

October 22nd Jake Griffiths & Eleanor Muir



It was lovely to be part of the happy service when Liz baptised her own grandson, Cole.



Dates for your diary

November 14th: 10.45 Remembrance Sunday with the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 11 o'clock.

Wednesday November 24th: Liz Rowles's licensing service at St John's. Places are limited. Please contact Eleanor on 07942 490524 or eleanor.doyle@outlook.com

Sunday November 27th: 10.45 joint service with St John's to celebrate Liz's licensing as part of the Heatons team.

6:30 Choral Evensong for Advent Sunday

Sat December 4th Christmas Fair

Sun December 5th 10.45 Toy Service

5.00pm St Nicholas Day service following the Lantern Parade from Heatons' Hub.

Calling hymn singers!

Is there anyone in the congregation who would like to join the choir for Sunday morning services only, for singing the hymns? There would be no obligation to be involved in the other choir music, such as for Choral Evensong (unless you would like to be) but we would love to have some reinforcements in the mornings! Please contact any choir member if you are interested.



*Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted, either by death or life:
hear our prayers and thanksgiving for all whom we remember at this
time;*

*fulfil in them the purpose of your love;
and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

If you are going to any concerts before Christmas, spare a thought for St Cecilia (2nd century) – the patron saint of musicians whose feast day is November 22nd

Cecilia is one of the most famous of the Roman martyrs of the 2nd century. As far as is known, she was born a noble lady of Rome who, despite her vow of virginity, was forced to marry an older pagan nobleman named Valerian. During the wedding, as the musicians played, Cecilia sat apart, singing to God in her heart, and for that she was later declared the saint of musicians. When the time came for her marriage to be consummated, Cecilia told Valerian that watching over her was an angel of the Lord, who would punish him if he sexually violated her but would love him if he respected her virginity.

Understandably startled by this, Valerian then asked to see the angel for himself. Cecilia replied that to do so, he must go to the third milestone on the Via Appia and be baptised by the Bishop of Rome. Valerian seems to have been a good-natured husband, because the story goes that he followed her suggestion, was baptised a Christian, and, sure enough, saw the angel protecting his wife.

Being a Christian in those days was dangerous, and when the next wave of Roman persecutions began, Valerian and Cecilia were among those arrested. It is said that they died at the hands of the Roman prefect Turcius Almachius, perhaps in Sicily sometime between 176 and 180 AD.

One story goes that Cecilia was struck on the neck with a sword, and, as she lay dying, asked that her house be converted into a church. Certainly an early Roman Christian church, Santa Cecilia, was founded in the fourth century in the Trastevere section of Rome, reputedly on the site of the house in which she lived. In the centuries since then, a number of musical compositions have been dedicated to her, and her feast day has become the occasion for many concerts and musical festivals. She is frequently depicted playing a viola, a small organ, or other musical instrument.



Saint Cecilia stained glass by Edward Burne-Jones in All Saints church, Preston Bagot

(Parish Pump)

God in the Arts The Revd Michael Burgess (Parish Pump)

(I have always loved El Greco's work so this article rang a chord with me, particularly as the painting mentioned is in Edinburgh, my home town, so I know it well.—Editor)

The philosopher Wittgenstein gave the following advice to people visiting an art gallery or exhibition: never try to rush through all the paintings on show, but instead choose just one painting. Sit in front of it for twenty minutes. Then get up and leave the art gallery. It is difficult advice to take to heart because we feel we want to get our money's worth from an exhibition, especially if we have paid an entrance charge. Once in the gallery we then feel so overawed by the number of paintings on show and the pressure of the crowd that we go quickly from one canvas to the next. The rushing around at a gallery is part and parcel of the way we meet each day. We rush out of habit, and we rush because everyone else is rushing. Our world seems set in the fast lane.

If we do want to take Wittgenstein's advice seriously and find ourselves in the National Gallery in Edinburgh, we could do no better than choose to sit in front of this month's painting: El Greco's 'The Saviour.' El Greco was born in 1541 in Crete. From Greece he travelled to Venice and Rome and finally to Toledo in Spain where he died in 1614. His art is a fusion of eastern and western traditions, given extra fervour by the Counter-Reformation and resulting in a unique style of painting. His canvases are peopled by elongated figures who seem always to be straining upwards, just as the Counter-Reformation was exhorting the faithful to set their sights on heaven as they made their journey through life.



El Greco, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

In his early years in Crete El Greco trained as an icon painter, and that is much in evidence in 'The Saviour.' It shows a half-length figure of Christ – he was to paint a fuller figure later. This Christ like an icon is looking out at us, with his right hand raised to bless us and this world, while the left hand holds that same world in His care. We can see in the eyes an inner strength, but also the poignant sadness of longing for this is a Saviour who has come through suffering and death to bring us new life.

As we look and see, we find here in El Greco's work a Christ-calmed steadiness amid the spinning world of rush and busyness. The nearer we draw to this Jesus, the slower we will find ourselves spinning. The duties and responsibilities that demand so much from us take their place in the wider perspective of the Saviour's grace and love. Then we can begin to experience that peace which the world cannot offer, but which Christ can bring.

The first step in that process is to stop and look. The Curé d'Ars, a parish priest in France in the early 19th century, told how he noticed an old man sitting at the back of his church every day. He didn't seem to be doing anything, just sitting there in the same place at the same time, looking towards the Blessed Sacrament on the High Altar. Eventually the young priest became suspicious. He asked the man what he was doing. 'I'm praying,' came the reply. 'Yes, but what exactly is it you do?' enquired the priest. 'Well, I look at Him and He looks at me.'