

Bollington Church News

The magazine of Bollington Parish Church, St Oswald's



November 2023

Price 50p



Who's who at St Oswald's

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Letter from Nancy

Dear All

November is Kingdom Season, the climax and culmination of the Church year.

Jesus taught about the Kingdom of Heaven repeatedly. In the days before Advent Sunday, we celebrate that Christ is King and has defeated the power of death and darkness for all time.



We remember that we are not isolated as Christians, not on our own, but part of the Church of God in the Kingdom of Heaven, which includes all the church, living and departed throughout the ages and to all eternity and we have “the cloud of witnesses which surround us on every side” (Hebrews 12.1).

Kingdom Season begins with three days of deep significance celebrating our mutual belonging. All Hallows’ Eve on 31st October (with our Messy Church Light Party for children) pokes fun at death because Jesus defeated death on the cross. We celebrate that darkness has no power to overcome the light of Christ.

The second of the three days is All Saints’ Day, celebrating all the saints whose earthly lives showed the powerful grace of God at work and who are now part of the joyful company of heaven. It reminds us that God’s grace may flow and sanctity may grow in the ordinary circumstances, as well as the extraordinary crises, of human living.

ALL WELCOME!

All Souls’ Communion service
Thursday 2nd November,
at 10.30am

Come and give thanks for
those whom you have
personally
known and loved.
We will be lighting candles
in thanksgiving
and remembrance.

The third day, All Souls' Day, on 2nd November, is when we give thanks for and remember the faithful departed, and the particular lives of those we have loved and who have died and are now in God's nearer presence. On Thursday 2nd November at 10.30am we have a special All Souls' Communion service and will be lighting candles in thanksgiving and remembrance.



The second Sunday in November, in Kingdom Season, is Remembrance Sunday, giving thanks for those who gave their lives in service of their country and remembering the cost of war, past and present. We are confronted with the challenges of war and peace, loss, self-gift, memory and forgetting. Lest we forget.

The annual cycle of the Church's year, and the Kingdom Season, ends with the celebration Sunday of Christ the King before starting afresh on Advent Sunday. The year that begins with the hope of the coming Messiah ends with the proclamation of his universal sovereignty. Christ is King. We can begin to look forward with hope to what is to come after a time of looking backward with thanksgiving for what has been.

Looking back with thanksgiving, and also looking forward with hope. It's a pattern that helps our lives and we can pray: For what has been, "Thank you". For what is to come: "Yes".

Every blessing, Nancy

**

Be a stained-glass window

People are like stained glass windows. We glow and sparkle when it is sunny and bright outside. But it is only when the sun goes down that our true beauty is revealed – and then only if there is a light deep within us – the light of God.

Welcoming all babies, toddlers & their carers!

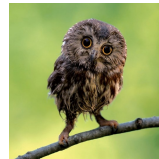
This month sees the relaunch of our weekly group for babies and toddlers. 'St Oswald's Little Owls' replaces our former 'Praise & Play' group. If you have 'little owls' in your family, do please bring them along for a morning of friendly fun and chat.



BOLLINGTON PARISH CHURCH



St Oswald's Little Owls



Baby and Toddler group

Tuesdays (in term time)

9.30 to 11.00am

Come along and join our friendly group of babies, toddlers, parents and carers offering friendship and mutual support.

Fun, games, craft, songs, stories, prayers

Refreshments provided



For further information contact Jackie Pengelly (Churchwarden) 07887 987082

or Rev Nancy (Vicar) 07895 363038

A time for Remembrance



Brian Reader comments on the front cover

*November comes, and November goes.
With the last red berries and the first white snows.*

*With night coming early and dawn coming late,
Ice in the bucket and frost by the gate.*

*The fires burn, and the kettles sing,
and the earth sinks to rest until next spring.*

– Clyde Watson

November is a month for reflection.

It starts with **All Saints' Day**, also known as **All Hallows' Day**, which is celebrated in honour of all the saints of the Church, whether they are known or unknown. This is followed by **All Souls' Day**, which is a day of prayer and remembrance for all the faithful departed.



Ann's picture of a poppy reminds us of the Armistice and Remembrance Sunday, when we not only remember the dead of the First World War, but also all other wars since that time.

The 1914 – 18 war was supposed to be the war that ended all wars, but we know that it did not. Why was that?

God has provided enough in this world for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed. In this very materialistic world, we see pride and envy, hatred and greed, and now even the reduction of free speech.

We must remember and proclaim that it was Jesus who taught us about truth and justice, and also that we should love our enemies, as God loves us.

The presence of the poppy is poignantly described in this poem:

Nature created a flower
with petals of brilliant red

who'd have thought such a beautiful flower
would be used to remember the dead?

For when all the guns have stopped firing
and there's only the mud and the rain
God sends his little red flowers
to cover the lads who were slain.

So, remember every November
when we hold our Remembrance Day,
of the lads who lie 'neath the poppies
and the price they had to pay.

**

Good to think about

The tragedy of war is that it uses man's best to do man's worst. - *Anon*

Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind. - *John F Kennedy*

Let men who delight in the cruelties of war remember that their day is coming. - *Louis Mumford*

In war, whichever side may call itself the victor, there are no winners, but all are losers. - *Neville Chamberlain*

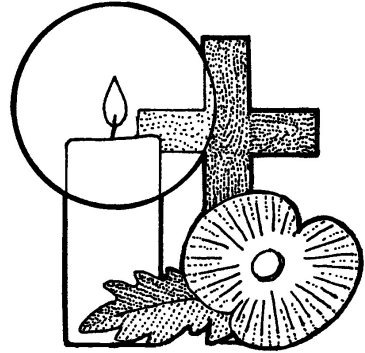
We can make up our minds whether our lives in this world shall wound like thorns and nettles or be beautiful and fragrant like the lilies of the field. - *Fr Andrew SDC*

Death, that final curb on freedom, has itself suffered a death blow through the resurrection of Jesus. - *Michael Green*

Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. - *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The poppies of Remembrance Sunday

In late 1914, WW1 erupted across Northern France and Flanders. Great swathes of previously green fields and forests were blasted and bombed, leaving them bleak and barren, with seemingly every living thing destroyed.



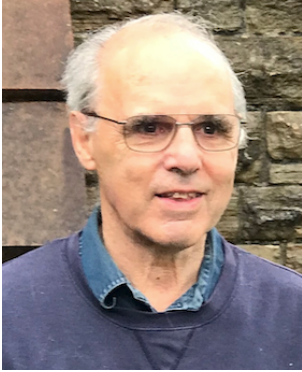
But then in the Spring of 1915, something beautiful began to come out of all the destruction. Tens of thousands of bright red Flanders poppies began to put out tentative shoots across the endless vistas of mud. These resilient little flowers had actually flourished in the middle of so much chaos and destruction, because their seeds grow when exposed to sunlight, through disturbances to soil.

We all know that these endless fields of cheerful poppies, growing in the midst of such destruction, were what inspired the Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, to write the now famous poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

And it was McCrae's poem which inspired an American academic named Moina Michael to adopt the poppy in memory of those who had fallen in the war. She got it adopted as an official symbol of Remembrance across the United States, and worked with others who were trying to do the same in Canada, Australia, and the UK.

A French woman, Anna Guérin who was in the UK in 1921, caught the same vision, and planned to sell the poppies in London. There she met Earl Haig, the founder of the Royal British Legion, who was persuaded to adopt the poppy as its emblem in the UK.

The Royal British Legion, which had been formed in 1921, ordered nine million poppies and sold them on 11th November that year. Ever since then, the red poppy has been a symbol of Remembrance, of support for the Armed Forces community, and also of hope for a peaceful future.



Organ Music at St Oswald's

Chris Ward reports

There has always been a strong tradition of music in St Oswald's church.

The earliest record is a photograph now in the vestry of 'Bollington Cross choir' in 1893 with Herbert Sutton, headmaster of the school and William Armitt, the organist. This was when the church was in the school building and by implication there must have been an organ there.

When the St Oswald's church was built in 1908, it was described as having a 'two manual organ', thought to have come from a congregational church in Macclesfield. However, by the 1960s this organ had become in a 'decrepit' state and a replacement was needed. After much fund-raising, a suitable second-hand organ was found in 1967, described as 'having sound pipework that could not be faulted but old fashioned in appearance'.

The origins of this organ are unclear. Originally thought to have been built by Peter Conacher in the late 19th century, later examination suggests it may have been built by George Benson of Manchester in about 1908. It was then built and installed in St Oswald's by Messrs Charles Smethurst of Gorton Manchester. A loan from the Parish was required to help pay for the organ - a total of £1800 paid in three instalments over twelve months. A service of dedication was held with an opening recital given by Mr Ronald Frost, Tutor of the Royal Manchester College of Music, on Thursday 13th July 1967.

The organ has been regularly maintained and tuned but has now come up for some important repairs. This is why we are having a fund-raising campaign beginning with a concert given by the Capriccio Vocal Ensemble in the Church on Saturday 4th November starting at 7.30pm, entitled 'Sure on this Shining Night', one of the many songs that will be performed.

We are blessed with three regular organists, who play for Sunday services, funerals, and weddings, whose skills and time we appreciate. The organ is also

used to accompany concerts and carol services given by the church, Bollington Cross School, the Bollington Festival Choir and by other visiting groups like Capriccio.

The organ is a very important part of the church and the community which we hope it will remain in the years to come.

**

SMILE LINES

Died in the services?

Little Alex was staring up at the large brass plaque that hung on the side wall of the church. The plaque was covered with names, and it seemed to fascinate the seven-year-old. He asked the minister who they were. "Well, they were people who used to go to this church," explained the minister. "This is a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the services."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque. Little Alex's voice was barely audible when he asked, "Which service, the 9 o'clock, or the 11 o'clock?"

**

Notice on a church in Cheshire:

'This is the House of God, this is the gate of Heaven.'

(This door is locked in winter months.)

Wanted

A lady was advertising for a travelling companion, and ended with these words: 'Christian wanted, cheerful if possible.'

Light

A small boy was fascinated by the red Sanctuary lamp during a rather long sermon. Finally, he whispered: 'Mum, when the light changes to green, can we go?'

We continue our series on the Spiritual Disciplines.

The Spiritual Disciplines: Generosity

'It is more blessed to give than to receive' (Acts 20:35).

What does generosity look like for us? The practice of generosity is about more than finance, as we recognise that everything we possess belongs to God (Ps 24:1). We are stewards of all our resources, including time, possessions, gifts, as well as our love and compassion for others. God enables us to be generous, because of all that He has given us:

'You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.' (2 Cor 9:11).

Here are some practical ways of practising generosity:

Give consistently: Planning our financial giving ensures that it isn't an afterthought, but carefully considered (2 Cor 9:7). We can offer time to volunteer in church or in the wider community. We might open our home to others for a meal or coffee.

Give spontaneously: God often brings opportunities across our path where we can respond spontaneously. This might be prompted by a text from a friend in crisis or giving a neighbour a helping hand. Acting spontaneously reminds us that God is always working in and through us.

Give sacrificially: Being generous also involves making sacrifices with our time and priorities, as we help others, share our possessions, or use our gifts. How can we simplify our busy lives, in order to free up space to practise more life transforming generosity?

To engage in generosity is an invitation to experience more of God's provision in our lives: *'Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you'* (Luke 6:38).

All in the month of ... November

It was:

100 years ago: on 8th Nov 1923 that Christian Barnard, South African cardiac surgeon was born. He carried out the first successful human heart transplant in 1967. (Died 2001.)

Also 100 years ago, on 11th Nov 1923 that the eternal flame at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris was lit. It was the first modern-day eternal flame in Europe.

80 years ago, from 28th Nov to 1st Dec 1943 that the Tehran Conference in Iran was held. US President Franklin D Roosevelt, British Prime minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Leader Joseph Stalin met to discuss plans for a second front against Nazi Germany. This led to the D-Day assault on Normandy and the Allied invasion of occupied Europe, starting in June 1944.

75 years ago, on 4th Nov 1948 that American-born British poet and playwright T S Eliot won the 1948 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Also 75 years ago, on 14th Nov 1948 that Charles, King of England, was born.

60 years ago, on 22nd Nov 1963 that US President John F Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas by suspected gunman Lee Harvey Oswald.

Also 60 years ago, on 22nd Nov 1963 that CS Lewis, Irish-born British novelist, literary critic and academic, died. Best known for this book on Christian apologetics, and the Chronicles of Narnia.

Also 60 years ago, on 23rd Nov 1963 that the first episode of the science fiction television series *Doctor Who* was broadcast in the UK. It is the longest-running and most successful science fiction TV series in the world.

50 years ago, on 13th Nov 1973 that Britain declared a state of emergency as a strike by coal miners caused supplies to dwindle. A 3-Day Week was introduced to conserve supplies.

40 years ago, on 14th Nov 1983 that it was announced that the first American Cruise missiles had arrived at Greenham Common airbase.

30 years ago, on 1st Nov 1993 that the Maastricht Treaty came into effect, establishing the European Union. (EU).

20 years ago, on 22nd Nov 2003 that England won the Rugby World Cup for the first time.

15 years ago, on 14th – 15th Nov 2008 that the first G20 Summit was held in Washington DC. It was established as a result of the 2008 financial crisis.

**

As for those signs found outside churches:

On a church carpark sign: FOR MEMBERS ONLY. Trespassers will be baptised.

No God - No Peace. Know God - Know Peace.

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Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here!

Come in and pray today. Beat the Christmas rush!

Outside one church is a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are inscribed. A headline reads: 'For fast relief, take two tablets.'

When the restaurant next to a church put out a big sign with red letters that said, 'Open Sundays', the church reciprocated with its own message: 'We are open on Sundays, too.'

Story Behind the Hymn: O God our Help in Ages Past

We continue our occasional series on how some of the famous hymns came to be written.

*1 O God, our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,
our Shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal Home.*

*2 Under the shadow of Thy throne, Thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defence is sure.*

*3 Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,
from everlasting Thou art God, to endless years the same.*

*4 A thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.*

*5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream bears all its sons away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.*

*6 O God, our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,
be Thou our Guard while life shall last, and our eternal Home!*

Source: Psalms & Hymns to the Living God

O God our Help in Ages Past is considered one of the grandest hymns in the English hymnody. It is sung at the annual Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph in London, and it was also sung at the funeral of former prime minister Winston Churchill in St Paul's Cathedral.

The hymn was written by Isaac Watts in 1719, as a paraphrase of Psalm 90. It is a psalm of Moses and carries a strong message of hope and faith in God's loving care.

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton in 1674, the eldest of nine children. His father, an educated deacon in a dissenting Congregational church, was in prison for his non-conformist beliefs at the time of Isaac's birth.

Watts had an outstanding aptitude for language. By the time he was 13 he had learned Latin, Greek, French, and Hebrew. He had also begun to write in verse, even speaking in rhyme in ordinary conversation – much to the irritation of some of his family!

By the time Isaac was 18, he had a particular bugbear – the deplorable state of congregational singing. It was mostly metrical psalms, which were heavy going and ponderous. But many non-conformists thought that if congregations sang anything other than the actual words of Scripture, it would be an insult to God.

Isaac was complaining about this one Sunday when his father suddenly challenged him: ‘Why don’t you give us something better to sing, then?’

Isaac accepted the challenge. The next Sunday he produced his first hymn, and the congregation loved it. Isaac then wrote new hymn texts for his church - every Sunday for the next two years. By 1719, Watts had published a hymnal: *The Psalms of David in the Language of the New Testament*. He had paraphrased nearly the entire Psalter.

In all, Watts wrote more than 600 hymns. Other favourites include *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*, and the famous Christmas carol *Joy to the World*.

At the time, some people felt Watts’s hymns were "too worldly" as they were not based solely on the Psalms. Yet Watts argued that the Christian church should sing of Christ. He explained his approach this way:

"Where the Psalmist describes religion by the fear of God, I have often joined faith and love to it. Where he speaks of the pardon of sin through the mercies of God, I rather choose to mention the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God. Where He promises abundance of wealth, honour, and long life, I have changed some of these typical blessings for grace, glory and life eternal, which are brought to light by the gospel, and promised in the New Testament."

Watts died in 1748, having been a much-loved hymn-writer, scholar, pastor, and preacher.

Be a Barnabas - encourage one another

Consider the power that each one of us has been given - to help others.

'You'll never amount to much' said a Munich schoolteacher to the ten-year-old Albert Einstein. Good thing that he did not listen – and instead went on to prove his teacher wrong!

Just as children need encouragement, so do God's children. St Paul urged the Christians in his young churches to *'encourage one another.'* (1 Thess 5:11). In the Upper Room, Jesus used the same word to describe the Holy Spirit, meaning one *'called alongside to help'*.

When we encourage others, we exercise a ministry like that of the Spirit to each other. In Acts we read of Joseph, a wealthy Levite from Cyprus. We know him better by his nickname Barnabas, which means *'Son of Encouragement'* (Acts 4:36). How did Barnabas encourage others?

He was an example of *generous giving* (Acts 4:36-7), when he sold property and offered the money to the church for those in need. In the midst of a caring and sharing community, he was singled out as a symbol of generosity. Are we prepared to be generous to those in need around us?

He later gave *encouragement to a new Christian* in the person of Paul (Acts 9:27). After Paul's conversion and aware of his reputation, Barnabas came alongside Paul and brought him into the fellowship of the Church. Are we ready to help those who are new to the faith to find a place in our church?

Finally, Barnabas was sent to the church in Antioch and there *'saw the evidence of the grace of God'* (Acts 11:23). Here was a church which brought together Jewish and Gentile believers together for the first time. Like Barnabas, are we able to rejoice when we see God doing new things? Are we also willing to encourage others to embrace these things and facilitate change?

Don't forget, *'In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity.'* (Albert Einstein).

Book of Remembrance for November

6 th Nov	George Bowden
6 th Nov	Beryl Willis
7 th Nov	Wynnie Downes
7 th Nov	Winifred Mary Beardmore
9 th Nov	Harry Newton Clay
10 th Nov	Eileen Robinson
11 th Nov	Joyce Elizabeth Coley
11 th Nov	Hannah Ashton
11 th Nov	John (Jack) Archer
13 th Nov	Len Davenport
14 th Nov	Margaret Langford
14 th Nov	Peggy Hargreaves
14 th Nov	Norah Sharpley
16 th Nov	Mark Stewart Whittaker
18 th Nov	Thelma Gottlieb
19 th Nov	George Eric Gosling
20 th Nov	Gordon Oldfield
22 nd Nov	Beatrice Skirvin
23 rd Nov	Jean Wrigley
23 rd Nov	Marjorie Alice Craine
23 rd Nov	Mary Bowden
25 th Nov	Brian Bernard Newbould
25 th Nov	Harry Ainsworth
29 th Nov	Irene F M Bennett
29 th Nov	Bert Mitchell



Would you like to include the name of a departed loved one? An entry costs £10. Please contact Ann Stringer on 01625 574325

From the Registers

Burial of Ashes 19th October - Alan Heald

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Bollington Church News – how to contact us

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Get the magazine: please ring Ann Stringer on 01625 574325.

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Giving to St Oswald's: Our bank account name is 'The Anglican Parish of Bollington PCC'. Our account number is **39536416** and the sort code is **01-05-41**. Or talk to Richard Raymond, our treasurer, on 01625 612025.

Worship at St Oswald's in November

Sunday 5th Nov

9.15am Parish Communion

10.30am All Age Worship



Sunday 12th Nov - **Remembrance Sunday**

9.15am Parish Communion

(note earlier time of service)

11.00 Service of Remembrance at Bollington Memorial Gardens

Sunday 19th Nov

10.30am All Age Communion

Sunday 26th Nov - **Sunday of Christ the King**

10.30am Parish Communion

Sunday 3rd Dec - **ADVENT SUNDAY**

9.15am Parish Communion

10.30am All Age Worship & making Christingles

4.00pm Christingle Service

Thursday 2nd November – All Souls Communion Service 10.30am

Give thanks and light a candle in memory of your departed loved ones.

Saturday 4th November - 'Music for an autumn evening'

St Oswald's, 7.30pm. The Capriccio Vocal Ensemble is returning to St Oswald's for a concert of sparkling music. Tickets £10. Under 18s free. From Cherry Smith on 01625 829805, or on the door. Proceeds to the church organ fund.

Wednesday 29th November - Church in the Pub

Come and join us in the Cotton Tree at 8pm!

Regular midweek activities

Every Tuesday during term time, 9.30-11.00am, St Oswald's Little Owls

Every Thursday at 10.30am, Holy Communion