

ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD

PARISH NEWS

www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk

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Dear Parishioners and Friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

Requiem for All Souls

Last September in what seems like those far off days when we could travel freely, I was enjoying a week's holiday in Olsztyn, the largest city in Warmia and Mazuria region of Poland. On one of the days we travelled to a cemetery to see the graves of Monika's grandparents. At the cemeteries in Poland you will frequently find a small shop at the gates where you can buy fresh flowers and candles to lay at the grave of your loved one. This way of remembering takes place throughout the year in Poland so imagine how important the festival days of All Saints and All Souls are to the Polish people.

Social custom in Poland still supports long term grief of families and Polish people will be seen cleaning the family graves during this week leading up to the 1st and 2nd November. Then vigil lights are burned on the memorial stones, creating a moving night-time scene as the multitude of lights are seen flickering on the graves dispelling the darkness. This of course reminds me of the Easter Vigil when we bring the Easter Candle into All Saints as we are reminded of Christ's victory over death. This points to the important message that we are not just remembering our departed loved ones at this time, but we are reminded too of the Resurrection hope All Saints and All Souls bring. It is clear to me that how we remember our departed loved ones helps us face our loss. Firstly, they are not forgotten and secondly, we believe that our ordinary lives are connected to the hope of being in communion with the divine. Yes, this weekend we are reminded of the hope of New Life won for us in Christ.

The sermon I offer this week reminds us that we are all knitted together in a communion of love where we all play our part in using our gifts to build the Body of Christ. Our recorded service for All Souls will speak of the Resurrection hope that we can find particularly through the life of Mary and her response to God. This week you will be able to hear the name of your departed loved one read out at the recorded service that Jeanette and I will be sharing. Jeanette has also offered us a link found in this newsletter when you can remember your loved one and light a virtual candle in memory and in hope.

Returning to the theme of our Patronal Festival and All Saints, Mike Moss forwarded me an excellent piece of writing from the thoughtful and challenging former Bishop of Durham and Biblical scholar, Tom Wright. Wright reflecting on the passage set for All Saints Day on the Beatitudes in the light of Coronavirus offers the following comments. Firstly, the statement about God's Kingdom found in Matthew's gospel is not just about ethics but about mission. It isn't just that the people described will inherit the kingdom, but it is also concerned with us (the body of Christ) being responsible in answering our baptismal call to bring something of God's Kingdom to earth.

Wright goes on to write that this will happen by God working through people. He points out that at times like the Pandemic we ask why does God allow this to happen? Why doesn't he send a thunderbolt and put this all right? 'The answer is that God sends his thunderbolts – human ones. He sends in the poor in Spirit, the meek, the mourners, peacemakers, the hungry for justice people. They are the way God wants to act in his world'. Wright is suggesting that God has more confidence in humans to use their initiative and see where the real need is and go and meet those needs. Wright is challenging us the baptised people of God knit together in one communion, to ask how can

we help solve the problems we face in the light of the pandemic. What needs to be done? What people are at most risk? How can we help? My sermon tries to reflect that we are all called to play our part and we will need each others support. The next twelve months we will continue to face the challenge of keeping contact with one another, continue to be challenged to find people to build the church community, continue to seek ways of meeting the needs of our wider community and at the same time be willing to leave the security of All Saints Church to worship in another building. We will all need to reflect on how much our faith means to us. How will we play our part as modern day humble and ordinary saints offering our time, talents and perhaps money to continue the mission within this parish and further afield.

Bible Study

As we try to strengthen our faith and see how the gathered community of God can face all kinds of challenges we begin on the 5th November at 7.00pm our Bible Study course 'Living is Christ, Dying is Gain'. This course is based on Bishop Steven's excellent podcasts that he shared based on Paul's letter to the Philippians. Please let Jeanette or me know if you would like to join us.

Prayer Group

We began our newly formed Monday night prayer group which meets on Mondays from 7.30pm – 8.00pm. It is an informal group where we seek to pray for particular needs within the parish and beyond. Last week we prayed for the ministry of All Sorts and the work with adults with learning difficulties. On 2nd November Jeanette will lead our prayers by speaking briefly about Street Angels. Please feel free to join us on zoom. See Resources for details.

Choir

As you will read in Brian's music section of this newsletter you will find the excellent news that small numbers of people will be invited to form a choir each week. Clearly not all the choir can sing each week, but we are hoping that a quartet will sing a couple of hymns each week at the Sunday Eucharist. May I join Brian in thanking Relf Clark for his outstanding support in playing organ music at our services since re-opening in July. Thanks go to Andrew Stafford for offering plainsong singing of the liturgy which has been a prayerful addition to our worship. We are blessed with having excellent musicians within our community and I am happy that Relf will continue playing on Wednesday's for us.

Operation Christmas Child

Please see information in this newsletter on page 9 about Operation Christmas Child which supports children in real need. Jenny Wilks has given us information on how to support this year.

Christmas Cards

The Christmas cards are ready to purchase at the church. They are made up in packs of 5 and cost £5 per pack. All the proceeds will go towards the floor restoration fund. See page 8.

Gwen Burkitt

Congratulations to Gwen Burkitt as she reached the remarkable age of 98 on 22nd October. Many congratulations, Gwen, with love from Fr Jeremy and the community of All Saints.

Sad News

Finally, it is with sadness that I share with you the news of the deaths of Marilyn Foster and Otto Jakeman. Marilyn was a regular member of the 8.00am BCP communion service and worked with Elizabeth Bryson in Windsor as a teaching assistant. Otto was a long-serving sidesman at ten o'clock who will be remembered by some members of the congregation

We keep in our prayers Roy, Marilyn's husband and her children Claire, Robert and Matthew and Otto's family.

Resources

Thursday 29th October 8.00pm Night prayer on Zoom

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75976544021?pwd=Q1pJVtIpbTytOdHg0VXhSRGxWRzIzZz09>

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziv

Reading John 16: 1-15 and Psalm 91

Hymn: For All the Saints 296

If you have internet access, please continue to use the Church of England and Oxford Diocesan resources. The Diocesan resources can be found without internet on 01865 920930.

The Church of England's new resource 'Daily Hope' which includes comforting hymns, daily prayers and reflections can be found on free telephone 0800 804 8044.

We'll be using the simple service from the Church of England prayer books we've been issuing. It begins on page 24 and finishes on page 30. Or use this link: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer>

You should have received a copy of this helpful blue book but if you haven't please let me know.

Sunday 1st November 10.00am Eucharist to celebrate All Saints Day our Patronal Festival

All Souls – Please find the recorded service on our web-site

Monday 2nd November 7.30pm Prayer Group via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85011600714?pwd=Y0x2VWpMQ3JFUStsQ0plbEFLOEQrQT09>

Meeting ID: 850 1160 0714

Passcode: 553120

Wednesday 4th November 10.00am Eucharist

Prayer Intentions

We continue to pray for the community of All Saints as face the challenges of keeping our community together in these difficult times. We pray too for the challenges we face next year as we undertake the floor project and find a place to praise and worship God. As we celebrate the festival of All Saints we are reminded of our calling as baptised members of Christ's Body to play our part within the community.

This week we pray for the ministry of All Sorts. We give thanks for the opportunity to share the Gospel message of Hope with adults with learning difficulties. We give thanks too for the volunteers that help run this group. At this time of the Pandemic we pray for those that would normally attend the All Sorts on a Thursday and for those who care for and support them.

As we see signs of increased numbers of people sadly needing care in hospitals we pray for all those who are NHS staff and care workers. We pray for John, Helen, Joanne, Karen, Carole, Richard, Ricky, Dagma, Emmanuel, Magda and Eleanor.

Gong back to pre-Covid we pick up our regular intentions for groups and organisations around us; this week we ask for your prayers for all those who are involved in cleaning the church to keep it safe for worship. For the work of the Children's Society and for a good response to this year's Operation Christmas Child Appeal.

We pray for those recovering from the virus. We remember Fr John Chadwick, Nick Moss and Mark. May your loving and healing presence be with them.

We remember at this time of Remembrance all our departed loved ones and the recently departed: Marilyn Foster and Otto Jakeman. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Blessings at All Saintstide, and may you all be blessed by God's love this week.

Fr Jeremy

Worship for Sunday 1 NOVEMBER ALL SAINTS' DAY

Sounds of Worship Brian Graves

This week marks an important progression for Sounds of Worship at All Saints. We will be starting hymn singing in church courtesy of a socially distanced quartet consisting of Anne Clark, Jayne Chapman, Andrew Stafford and I accompanied by Simon Fullarton. Regrettably, this will have to be quartet only without congregational singing, but I hope those who will be in church on Sunday will enjoy hearing hymns sung for them live rather than relying on YouTube clips in the Newsletter.

I must also record our appreciation of Relf Clark who has provided organ music on Sundays and Wednesdays since July and he will continue to play for Wednesday services. Also, to Andrew Stafford who has sung various solo parts on Sundays over the last few months and more recently has provided a treble soloist to sing Pie Jesu from Fauré's Requiem.

The gospel for today is taken from Jesus' sermon on the Mount where he lists the characteristics which are blessed above all other. The so-called Beatitudes. Not only is the list all the positive things we do in our should in our lives, but also Jesus concludes with importance of accepting the harsh and terrible things that can be meted-out to Christians in His name. This combination of goodness and acceptance is the essence of Sainthood.

The choir quartet will sing two hymns, the first of which will be the Gradual, "For all thy saints, O Lord" words by Richard Mant (1776 – 1848) to the tune Carlisle by Charles Lockhart (1745 – 1815).

The hymn follows a simple structure of referring to the lives of the saints in verses 1, their reward in heaven in verse 2, how we and the saints are united in the Love of God in verse 3, a prayer that we may follow this path and a concluding doxology in verse 5.

Richard Mant was educated at Winchester College and Trinity College Oxford. He was ordained in 1802 and after serving at several parishes in England he was appointed Bishop of Killaloe in Ireland in 1820 and ultimately, from 1842 Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore. He published a wide range of books including a collection of English translations of Latin hymns in 1837 ("Ancient Hymns from the Roman Breviary") and metrical versions of psalms in "The Psalms in an English Metrical Version" in 1824. "For all thy saints, O Lord" is an original hymn by Mant but was included in "Ancient Hymns from the Roman Breviary".

Relatively little is known about Charles Lockhart other than he was an organist and composer of the hymn tune Carlisle which was published in 1791.

1. For all thy saints, O Lord,
who strove in thee to live,
who followed thee, obeyed, adored,
our grateful hymn receive.
2. For all thy saints, O Lord,
who strove in thee to die,
and found in thee a full reward,
accept our thankful cry.

3. Thine earthly members fit
to join Thy saints above,
in one communion ever knit,
one fellowship of love.
4. Jesus, thy Name we bless
and humbly pray that we
may follow them in holiness,
who lived and died for thee.
5. All might. All praise, be thine,
Father, co-equal Son,
And Spirit, bond of love divine,
While endless ages run.

For all thy saints, O Lord <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvAXr3uxYzM>

To conclude the service we will sing "For all the saints" words by William Walsham How (1823 – 1897) to the tune Sine Nomine by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958). How took Hebrews 12 verse 1 as his inspiration: "And what of ourselves? With all these witnesses to faith around us like a cloud, we must throw off ever encumbrance, every sin to which we cling and run with resolution the race for which we entered, our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom faith depends from start to finish"

How's words make regular reference to the importance of faith in Jesus to provide the strength to endure and win the race. Also, the verses chart the progression from struggle to ultimate victory. For All the Saints" is considered to be How's finest hymn text. Originally in eleven stanzas, it was published in Earl Nelson's Hymns for Saints' Days (1864) with the heading, "Saints' Day Hymn. A Cloud of Witnesses. Heb. 12:1."

On Trinity 1 we used another hymn by How and I include the notes about How again for reference. Walsham How was ordained in 1846 and worked in various parishes in Shropshire until 1879 when he was appointed the first suffragan Bishop of London, under the title of the Bishop of Bedford. His province was the East End where he initiated the revival of the church in the area and did a great deal to support the poor. In 1888 he was made the first Bishop of Wakefield where he continued to promote the gospel and establish new churches. How wrote several commentaries on the gospels and liturgy more generally which were published by the SPCK. He also published his sermons and wrote a significant number of hymns including, in addition to the one we have today, "For All the Saints who from their labours rest".

The tune Sine Nomine was written specifically for the hymn "For all the Saints" for the first edition of the English Hymnal in 1906. Sine Nomine means "Without Name" which is a reference by Vaughan Williams to the numberless and nameless cloud of witnesses that so inspired How.

1 For all the saints who from their labours rest,
who thee by faith before the world confessed,
thy name, O Jesu, be forever blest.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

2 Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might;
thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
thou, in the darkness, still their one true light.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

3 O may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
and win with them the victor's crown of gold.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

4 O blest communion, fellowship divine,
we feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
yet all are one in thee, for all are thine.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

5 And when the fight is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

6 The golden evening brightens in the west;
soon, soon to faithful warrior cometh rest;
sweet is the calm of paradise the blest.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

7 But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;
the saints triumphant rise in bright array:
the King of glory passes on his way.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

8 From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Alleluia! Alleluia!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_UvXe-of-s

COLLECT

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Jesus 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 forever. Amen

EPISTLE 1 John 3: 1 - 3

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

GOSPEL Matthew 5: 1 – 12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught 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 receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.'

SERMON Fr Jeremy

As I began preparing to write this sermon for our Patronal Festival I felt in need of a lift. This has been after all a difficult and challenging year for the World not just for Britain and certainly not just for the people of All Saints. I hope that by the time you either read or listen to this message you will feel a little more upbeat. This is not because of anything that I offer but what hope Christ offers as we celebrate the Saints.

To discover that hope as well as joy and happiness reflect upon the collect for today. We begin by thinking about the words 'O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord...' The word 'Elect' has caused many problems over the centuries. It may even make us think that while many are called only a few are chosen. At this point you may be thinking where do I find the good news in this message?! Well we need to think about the meaning of 'Elect'. In the Old Testament the elect or chosen people of God were the people of Israel. They were the chosen people whose call it was to bring the good news of salvation to ALL people. Of course, that hope would come as the prophets foretold through the suffering servant, Jesus Christ. The one truly 'Elected person' was God's Son, Jesus Christ. It was through his coming among us as a vulnerable baby boy that he grew to be the man who gave his life so that all people may have the hope of new life.

The 'Elect' are then all members of Christ's Body who through their Baptism receive adoption as brothers and sisters of Christ and share in the corporate life of his community, the gathered people of God or if you like the church. Greg Hirst asked me recently about the testing biblical text that we had a few weeks ago which said 'many are called but few are chosen. I didn't really have an answer but perhaps our understanding may be this. God wants all his creation to be saved, so 'many' people can be seen to grow to ALL people. The few called on the other hand becomes one, the chosen of God, Jesus Christ his son. Through the actions of this one elected man we are all called to be members of his body through our baptism. We are the community that 'knit together' in one communion. The Eucharist which we celebrate today and has been celebrated in this church for 163 years enables us to receive the gift of new life in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through our baptism as brothers and sisters of Christ we are drawn together or knit together in the Holy Spirit to live Christlike lives in response to his love. We are to partake of the Body of Christ to become his body in the world. We are to be a light to the world.

If we now move to the Gospel and the Beatitudes, we find that a Saint lives as someone who believes that the best is yet to come. A belief that the 'Elected' son of God has won for us the Kingdom of heaven and wants us to live life bringing those Kingdom qualities to earth. That is the challenge for each one of us to bring a little of God's love through our small acts of kindness to this world.

If we return to the idea of being 'Knit together' we find in Paul's letter to the Colossians Chapter two that we are knit together in love. The needles needed for knitting are if you like acts of love and support in community. During the pandemic we have seen great acts of unity and sadly acts of 'I need to do what is right for me as an individual'. At this most horrible time in most of our lives some people are seeing the need to take care of oneself and others are seeking the common good, perhaps surprisingly one, Marcus Rashford from the world of football celebrity. If we believe that we are born into Christ, we are members of his body. We are knit together in communion most beautifully and powerfully understood and experienced through the Eucharist. This calls us to respond to the needs of each other as well as those we reach out to in the wider community.

Another word that we find in the Beatitudes is 'Blessed'. In Greek the word Makarios means experiencing a state of happiness or even joy. The Saints are people who lived with this sense of joy at knowing that Christ has won the victory. The Kingdom of heaven has been won for us and that death has been conquered. The Saints encourage us to follow Christ and inspire us to live lives in the hope of knowing that the best is yet to come.

At this church of All Saints we will need to call upon the belief that we are called to be knit together to support one another. We are facing the most challenging times of our lives (At least for most of us) during the Pandemic especially in trying to keep community together. Next year we are committed to repair the floor of this building so that this church can continue to be a place where the people of God can gather to celebrate the worship of God, to be fed and nurtured and reach out to support the vulnerable, the young and offer pastoral care to those in need. All Saints buildings also remind us of the rich heritage that Christians offer within the education of the young. It is

wonderful that this community through Open the Book, assemblies and when possible welcome of students into this church continues the vision of education of the young.

However, it is true to say that the body of Christ that is knitted together in love is not just found in this wonderful building. We will need to be gathered within another building next year for at least six months and I hope that you will all see the need to support each other by continuing to worship together and by using your gifts, talents and money in our mission to bring the gospel of Christ to our community.

My prayer this All Saints day is that we will follow the men and women who lived life joyfully knowing that Christ has won for them New Life. In response to God's love we follow St Teresa of Lisieux and St Teresa of Calcutta by 'Doing the small things well with love.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

ALL SAINTS CHRISTMAS CARDS

The delightful "Quad in Winter" picture by Reg Denison is available again this year on Christmas cards in support of the Floor Appeal. They have the simple message "Best wishes for a joyful Christmas and peaceful New Year" and a quote from Luke 2: 10-11. The initial run of cards has been donated so all profits go to the appeal

To keep things simple this year and adhere to Covid rules the cards will be available at the rear of the church in packs of five (£5.00 for five cards) and can be collected after services on Sundays and Wednesdays from Sunday 18 October.

There will be an "honesty box" where cash or cheques can be deposited (please note change will not be available so please bring the right denomination for your purchases) Please make cheques payable to All Saints Church Fund.

To help us with ordering it would be helpful if you could let us know how many you intend to buy so we can keep reordering from the printers. To do so email Jeremy at nordbergjs@aol.com

They are beautiful cards (thanks again to Reg Denison) and will help us to complete our floor restoration.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOXES

Hello to all box holders,

I hope you are all keeping well during these difficult times. I have been sent information from the society enabling us to proceed with box opening. However, in order to keep us all safe things need to be done differently this year.

Please DO NOT bring your boxes to church.

I will arrange either collection from your home or for those able, to drop off to my home.

You all have my telephone number on your boxes so please call to discuss your preferences. If I am out then please leave your name and phone number and I will call back. I live in Boyn Hill Road and will let you know which house when you call. I do not have your phone numbers only your addresses.

Boxes must either be wrapped in newspaper or placed in carrier bags. They will be quarantined for 72 hours before opening. All monies will be handled using disposable gloves.

Your empty box will be returned to your home. Please put aside for 72 hours before using. They will be cleaned with a disinfectant wipe before returning.

I will write to anyone who does not respond within 4 weeks to try and make contact.

Should you wish to send a cheque this year to avoid social contact please give me a ring and I will pass on my address. You are probably aware that many charities are struggling this year and particularly need our help.

The Children's Society are very grateful for your continued support; however your health and safety must be your number one priority.

Anne Clark, Honorary Local Secretary, Children's Society

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL

We are going to be taking part in this appeal for the 8th time this year – with a few changes. Last year we donated over 100 boxes as gifts for children around the world who don't have much. The coronavirus pandemic is causing even greater hardship for some children and their families, and this is one way to show God's love and bring some joy. Please read the attached note for details of how you can contribute this year. If you have any questions, please contact me at jwilks@jwa-consultancy.co.uk.

REFLECTION by Greg Hurst

Two weeks ago my nephew shared a text alert: 'You have been identified as a contact of someone who has recently tested positive for Covid-19. You must now isolate for 14 days from the date of your contact.' He is barely into his first month as a student at Southampton university.

One lunchtime this week our daughter, a postgraduate student at a London university, sent me a message. Could she call? She told me one of her flatmates is self-isolating as friends he spent an evening tested positive for the virus. Should she apply for a test, she asked? It turned out she didn't qualify for a test but she, too, had to isolate – not for 14 days but for longer; she confined herself to their flat immediately he told her of his potential exposure. Three days later he too tested positive.

When we called her that evening it was a stark reminder of what this means in practice: no exposure to fresh air, limited opportunities for exercise in a second floor flat and enforced proximity to flatmates who four weeks ago she had not met. Luckily, they get on. Her flatmate whose exposure started the alert, an international student who had already undergone a 14-day isolation on arrival in London, wears a mask when he leaves his room for the shower, lavatory or kitchen and disinfects them afterwards; otherwise he stays in his room.

Conscientiously, they are following the rules - at some cost. We are asking a great deal of younger generations. We own them a debt.

TUESDAY CLUB QUIZ NIGHT 7.30pm 3 NOVEMBER

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84706003222?pwd=aDBJb1Brem5YRGF6cURYyONMzjVhdz09>

Meeting ID: 847 0600 3222

Passcode: 834854

Members and non-members are very welcome to join us for our very first Zoom Quiz night hosted by Janet, our multi-talented Secretary. No prizes but no wooden spoon either so not all bad! Just the satisfaction of taking part.

Jan Moss

MAIDENHEAD CARE

At last night's PCC meeting Maidenhead Care was mentioned and Fr Jeremy wondered if all the current PCC members knew about the work of Maidenhead Care. When it transpired that not everyone did we thought perhaps the newsletter readership might like a reminder.

In 1985 the Revd Peter Hudson came to Maidenhead as minister of High Street Methodist Church. He had set up a Good Neighbour scheme in his previous ministry in Essex and thought Maidenhead would benefit from something similar. So he canvassed the local churches and gained support from almost all of them, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, the United Reformed Church and other non-conformist churches. His initial Management Committee consisted of a representative from each of them; a truly ecumenical bunch. Churches canvassed their congregations for volunteers for the various roles; Duty Officer training took place and Maidenhead Care was born.

This was how it worked: the telephone line was open 24/7 and manned by a different volunteer (known as the Duty Officer) each day. The "shift change" was at 2.00pm. The services offered were transport (to doctor, dentist and hospital appointments), shopping (either accompanying or shopping for the client), befriending and help in the home or garden. The Duty Officer took the call, found a volunteer from the register, and made copious notes by hand. The telephone line was sponsored by a local company, and the Duty Officer switched the calls to come in on his/her number when they took over. The volunteer details were in a card index; all the paperwork was contained in two large suitcases and every day at 2.00pm the Maidenhead Care "office" moved to a different location.

Thirty plus years on and changes have taken place: no longer 24/7, phones are manned from 9.00am to 5.00pm on weekdays with an answerphone for the rest of the time. The "office" still moves on each evening but it now consists of a mobile phone and a laptop with a reference folder. In 2000 (?) Mike Moss built a database which contains the details of our volunteers and clients (all GDPR compliant, of course) which makes it much easier for the Duty Officer to find a driver who has the right sized car and is prepared to go to Wexham Park on a Wednesday afternoon or whatever is required.

But unsurprisingly, Covid-19 has, temporarily at least, put a stop to all that. During lockdown there were very few medical appointments, and in any case most of our clients and a lot of our volunteers came into the vulnerable category. Some shopping was done, befriending by telephone and some emergency driving but Maidenhead Care was effectively closed down at a stroke really.

We are now looking at ways we can safely restart some kind of service to the community. Face to face medical appointments are still quite rare, people will need to get their shopping and there are lonely folk who would welcome a visitor. But how safe do people feel with a passenger in their car, even with a face covering and windows open? Lots of questions to be asked and answered. Several of our volunteers have decided they would be unable to carry on, and others would rather wait until there is a vaccine before committing themselves.

Whatever happens in the future should not detract from the fact that one man's vision led to so many people of different denominations working together to reflect God's love in this place.

Jan Moss

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD - 2020



Operation Christmas Child was formed in 1990 when Dave Cooke from Wrexham saw the horror of children in Romanian orphanages. He asked his friends to help fill a truck with toys and drive it to Romania. OCC is now the world's largest Christmas project run by Samaritan's Purse. Since 1990, more than 168 million children in over 160 countries have experienced God's love through the power of a shoebox of gifts.

Packing shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child shoebox appeal has become an important part of our ministry in recent years and, speaking with Father Jeremy and others in our community, we agreed that we don't want to stop the support we give to these children. Last year, our 7th year of taking part, we donated over 100 boxes. We aren't going to be able to contribute in the same way as previously, because of the impact of Covid-19, but have come up with some alternatives.

In the midst of a global pandemic, the lives of children and families have been turned upside down and, now more than ever, boys and girls around the world need to experience hope and joy, and a shoebox gift offers just that!

There are 3 ways that you can contribute this year:

Shoebox Online - If getting out is tricky at this time, you can select your gifts online and Operation Christmas Child will pack and send your shoebox for you. Click on the link in the picture below or go to <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/> and choose 'Shoebox online'. It costs £20.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD - 2020

Donation –If you're not keen on the online option, you can make a monetary contribution. You can do this by making an online bank transfer or writing a cheque to the church - or by giving cash. Cheques or cash will be collected from church on Sundays and Wednesdays. **Please mark any donations clearly as being for the 'Shoebox appeal'**. (Cash involves visiting the bank, so the other options are preferred for Covid-19 reasons).

Your own shoebox –You could pack your own complete shoebox. Some of you have done this previously. Click on the link in the picture below or go to <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/> and choose 'How to pack a shoebox' for more information. As you may remember, there are some items not allowed and these are listed on the website – and it may give you some inspiration too! The nearest drop off point is Braywick Nurseries, 41 Braywick Rd, Maidenhead SL6 1DX. Dates to be confirmed but likely to be 7 – 13th November. Please don't bring your shoeboxes to the church.



A reminder of the project

There are a number of videos on the Samaritan's Purse website which give stories about the children who receive the boxes, but here is my favourite. You may remember it, as we've shown in several times in church.

WOW! video <https://youtu.be/i7g4C4k7UTw>

A simple heartfelt gift, packed with love and fuelled by prayer can mean so much to a child and their family – and enables us to share God's love and bring joy to children around the world.

We hope that you can support this project again this year – and please let me know if you send a box online or drop one off, so I can let you all know the number of boxes we donate.

Thanks, Jenny Wilks

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