

## St David's with St Michael's and All Angels, Mount Dinham, Exeter Newsletter for Sunday 31 October 2021 – Sunday of All Saints

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this week's newsletter.

Today we celebrate the Sunday of All Saints. At St David's we will give an opportunity for reflection on how the continuing pandemic has affected us and what we have learnt from it for the future. If you would like to use a prayer card for this purpose one will be available as you arrive. A simple brunch will be served after the service so please join in if you feel comfortable to do so.

**Please note that our Parish Meeting with Archdeacon Andrew is next Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> November from 10am to 12noon at St Michael's.**

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November we will hold a Requiem for All Soulstide at St Michael's at 6pm. If you would like someone remembered at the service please let Oliver Nicholson know.

In view of the continued high incidence of Covid infections we are keeping our current guidance about social distancing and face coverings at the moment. So please wear a face covering in church if you can and be mindful of keeping a safe distance from others indoors. Please 'mingle' carefully after the service and chat outside rather than inside (weather permitting). Please be mindful not only of your own wellbeing (especially if you're not vaccinated) but also of your neighbours' safety and make sure that you are not sitting directly behind other people especially if you would like to sing.

Please be patient, kind and respect the personal space of other people if they don't wish to get too close!

Our services today are:

**9.30am Parish Communion at St David's** (live streamed on St David's Church Exeter Facebook Page) with celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews, preacher Nigel Guthrie and reflections from Richard Johnson and Maggie Draper

**11am Sung Mass at St Michael's** with celebrant and preacher, Nigel Guthrie

**4pm Thrive Meeting** - On Zoom –a topical opportunity to learn and think about Halloween with our very own David James.

This week: Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88685738289?pwd=WEh1dINCY3NRQTlCcXFjK2ZlejR0UT09>

Meeting ID: 886 8573 8289      Passcode: 159821

**6pm Evening Prayer** in St David's Lady Chapel led by Bill Pattinson

### **Services in church and online this week**

Tuesday 2 November, All Souls Day, 9.30am on Zoom

Please join us on this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6602261392?pwd=VzdOaU1XUFBjWk9jV0xvMDZWajZBQT09>

Meeting ID: 660 226 1392      Passcode: 196651

Tuesday 2 November, All Souls Day, 6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's

Wednesday 3 November, 9.30am Mattins and 10 Mass at St Michael's

Thursday 4 November, 10.30am Holy Communion at St David's Church followed by refreshments

6pm Sung Vespers at St Michael's Church (live streamed on Friends of St Michael's Facebook Page)

Friday 5 November, 9.30 Morning Prayer at St David's Church (live streamed on St David's Facebook Page)

### **Sunday 7 November – Third Sunday before Advent**

9.30am Parish Communion at St David's with celebrant, Belinda Speed-Andrews and preacher, Ash Leighton Plom (live streamed on St David's Exeter Facebook page)

11am Sung Mass at St Michael's with celebrant and preacher, Ash Leighton Plom

4pm Thrive – Alpha Course - on Zoom

6pm Sung Requiem at St Michael's with celebrant Nigel Guthrie

6pm Evening Prayer (said) at St David's

### **Covid-19 Safe for Public Worship**

Please use hand sanitizer on entering and leaving church.

Please wear a face covering in church unless you are exempt.

At St David's we are encouraging people to wear face coverings to come forward to receive Holy Communion and then to consume the host after moving away from the altar rail.

At St Michael's the priest will distribute Holy Communion to people in their seats.

Seating will be distanced to approximately 2 metres. Please sit on the seats where service books are placed. Please do not sit too close to your neighbour unless invited to do so.

Services should be 'no longer than necessary'.

**Please mingle with care before or after services.**

***Please do not attend church if you are feeling ill or are shielding. Although we will do all we can to make the church safe you attend at your own risk.***

### **St David's Brunch Sunday 31 October 2021**

We are holding a simple brunch after the 9.30am service on 31 October. Do stay behind and join in if you are able and get to know someone new! Thank you to all those who have provided food and offered help.

### **Food for the Vulnerably housed in Exeter**

Working through St Petrock's we are providing 16 packed suppers each week for people who are in transitional accommodation at the Crescent. Thank you to the small team which has convened to buy and make them. We don't need any additional support at the moment as there is a significant amount in our 'Soup Evening' kitty which can fund this for the time being.

### **Visit of Archdeacon for a consultation about the future patterns of ministry in Exeter City Centre - PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE**

This meeting is next **Saturday 6 November from 10am to 12 noon**. It would be good to have as many people as possible from both churches at that meeting when

Andrew will outline possibilities for the future organisation of ministry in Exeter city and listen to our hopes and plans. You can discover the plans for the Diocese of Exeter by googling 'Diocese of Exeter – Next Steps'.

### **Men's Breakfast**

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 10am at the Farmers' Union. Please contact Nigel if you would like to be on a mailing list reminder for this.

### **Shoe Boxes for Moldova (advanced notice)**

We will be sending Christmas Boxes to Moldova again this year. Things are extremely difficult there at the moment, and anything we can do to brighten life is greatly appreciated. The boxes need to be ready for collection from the church by **Sunday November 21st**. All being well Hugh Skudder from Christian Response to Eastern Europe will be with us for the morning service on that day. Any questions, please speak to Ann Watts .

### **Coffee after Church**

As long as the Covid situation remains stable we are hoping to reinstate refreshments after church before too long. At St David's we would like to start coffee after church in November. Thank you to everyone who has already volunteered. We would still like a few more volunteers to help spread the load. If you would be willing to help with this ministry of hospitality please contact Jenny Baker.

### **Safeguarding News from Exeter Diocese**

The following link was provided in the Safeguarding Team update this week. It links to an informative piece from the BBC about the work being done by police to combat the County Lines network of drug dealing which targets Exeter, amongst other rural hubs. <https://anglican.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=543e9623f7379d75d88235209&id=f920aaf23a&e=2ebbf0f02f>

### **Help with Churchwarden tasks**

Often Churchwardens pick up tasks which could be done by others. We have already had some kind offers but there are a number of jobs which we will advertise in the coming weeks.

***Would you be willing to help with one of these, please, even if you can't do every week?***

Opening and closing the church on Sunday (weekly)

Clearing up (if needed) the churchyard on Sunday mornings before the service (equipment provided). Thank you!

### **Bountiful Table and Christmas Draw at St Michael's**

Next Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November the Bountiful Table will be running again at St Michael's and tickets will be available for the Christmas Draw. Your support will be much appreciated.

### **Help with Stained Glass**

The lovely stained glass panels in the south transept are usually changed with the season and John Wakley would like to instruct a few people on how to change them round safely. Please have a word with Nigel if you'd be willing to learn.

### **Hospiscare 'Marathon in a month' challenge**

A very big 'thank you' from Roger and Hilary to everyone who has supported and sponsored us. We have surprised ourselves by walking more than 56 miles (so just more than two marathons!) raising £255 in the process. Huge thanks. Sponsorship still welcome at

<http://www.justgiving.com/Margaret-Hilary-Todd>

### **Green Team**

Thank you also to everyone who has sponsored a fruit tree for St David's Churchyard. These are being ordered and we hope to plant them on the morning of November 27<sup>th</sup> after Men's Breakfast.

### **Exeter Wildlife Gardening Award**

Could you contribute to biodiversity in Exeter by taking part in this award? There are many simple things we can do to give nature a better foothold in our city. Why not have a look at the award and see if you can adapt your garden?

<https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/take-action/garden-wildlife/exeter-wildlife-gardening-award>

### **Parish Magazine – New Leaves**

The magazine for November should be available shortly. Thank you to our dedicated magazine team for their hard work.

### **Phone Networks**

If you would like to be phoned by someone from the church community or would just like to talk, please let Nigel know at [nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com](mailto:nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com) or by ringing him on 01392 660226 or Ash on 07855305519.

### **St Michael's services and prayers**

If you would like to access the service details and prayer list for St Michael's please contact Oliver Nicholson at [virtualsaintmichaels@gmail.com](mailto:virtualsaintmichaels@gmail.com) and he can add you to that weekly mailing.

### **Your Prayers are asked for...**

**Please remember those who have died recently including:**

Ian Watt, Will Shaman, Alan John Taylor

In the **Parish Cycle of Prayer:** Ben Bradshaw MP, our other local MPs and all City and County Councillors

**Please also pray for:**

the COP26 conference in Glasgow - for far-sighted decisions and purposeful follow-up;

those worried about the rising costs of energy and housing in this country;

our Members of Parliament and those who work to keep them safe;

those seeking to make social media platforms safer and more respectful places;

the people of Afghanistan, especially girls being denied their right to schooling;

the refugees from Afghanistan staying in Exmouth and Exeter;

the people of Ethiopia facing severe food shortages due to the conflict there;

the worldwide Covid vaccination programme, and the roll-out of booster vaccines;

those working in care homes, hospitals and hospices;

those suffering from Covid around the world.

With every blessing,

Nigel Guthrie

### **Prayers, Readings and address for the Sunday of All Saints, 31 October 2021**

#### **Collect**

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.

### **First Reading – Revelation 21: 1-6a**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.’

And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’

Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

### **Gospel Reading – John 11: 32-44**

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’ But some of them said, ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?’

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of the dead

man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

### **Address for 31 October for St Michael's Church by Nigel Guthrie**

If you visited Exeter Cathedral in the late 1400s you would have been greeted by a very different sight from today. The magnificent west front of the cathedral would have been finished only a decade or so earlier and the statues that are now worn, bare stone would have been pristine and brightly coloured. You may have seen the reconstruction of the colour scheme done by the talented artist and restorer, Eddie Sinclair which you can find if you google 'Exeter Cathedral West Front.' The figures on the west front would have given a vivid impression of the spiritual company you would be sharing as you entered the great church. The kings, prophets, saints and their supporting angels would appear to welcome you, to humble you and to offer you a vision of heaven. Perhaps St Michael's Church does that for us, too, with the carved angels surrounding us on every side of the church? Can we sense the cloud of witnesses praying with us in love, and urging us on in our faith? We should be assured that as we celebrate Mass here we do so as part of the innumerable company of heaven, not just as part of our small congregation. This is what we celebrate on this Sunday of All Saints.

When I was in London back in May I visited Westminster Abbey and saw the ten statues of 20<sup>th</sup> century martyrs that were unveiled in 1998 to fill the empty niches above the West Door there. One of those depicted, Oscar Romero, was born in a small village in El Salvador in 1917. He was ordained as a priest in the Roman Catholic Church and worked as a quiet and unassuming pastor. At the age of sixty he was chosen to be Archbishop of San Salvador. At a time of political and social turmoil he was seen as a safe appointment. But soon the Archbishop was speaking out against the violence which was endemic in his country and in support of the demands of the poor for economic and social justice. He refused to be silenced and, with great courage, continued with his message even when his life was threatened.

On 24 March in 1980, having been Archbishop for only three years he was assassinated while saying Mass.

Ever since Oscar Romero has been regarded as a martyr for his faith and after a miracle was attributed to him he was canonized by Pope Francis in 2018. So he is one of our most recent Saints and which of us would not admire the compassion and courage of this man who laid down his life in trying to help the people he had been chosen to serve?

What I find particularly fascinating about Romero's story is that for around forty years he ministered quietly without attracting much attention at all. Under other circumstances he might have stayed in his parish and died in old age as a much loved priest. It seems that circumstances play as much a part in making saints as in making heroes. Many of us may never know if we are really brave at heart, or how we would react in a terrible crisis. Perhaps we are saints or heroes whose time will never come? But I think there is more to it than that.

Oscar Romero is remembered because of what he did in the last three years of his life, or you might even say because of what the gunman did in the last minute of his life. So, what about his ministry over the past 40 or so years, was that not also of value? I'm sure it was. And perhaps those years of faithful, ordinary service have as much to teach us as the courageous stand he made in his final years.

I sometimes wonder how the saints would have done when faced with the humdrum and tedious problems that we often face; illness or disability or disagreements with family, friends or colleagues. I suspect that many of the saints would have made lousy parents or partners or colleagues in the office, perhaps that's why they became saints!

Yet it is in these everyday ways that most of us live out our Christian faith. Most Christians exercise their faith in their family circles, places of work and local communities, doing their best to love and to forgive in their daily situations. And for us in church the challenge is to keep our community of faith alive and healthy, and outward-looking not in the face of great persecution, but rather in the face of considerable apathy and indifference towards the things of God.

The celebration of All Saints grew from a desire to remember those Christians whose names and dates had not been recorded. All Saints Day was set aside to celebrate

the great company of those who had witnessed to the resurrection of Jesus Christ during their lives and sometimes by their deaths and it still reminds us of the faithful Christians who led us to faith and still surround us with their prayers.

When Jesus commanded Lazarus to come out of his tomb those watching must have been transfixed. What would happen? Could this man Jesus really raise the dead? We know in retrospect that Jesus was not only teaching them about his own forthcoming death and resurrection, but also showing them the power of God to make all things new. We easily fall into thinking that things can never change; that we can never change. But Jesus wants us to know that God has the power to renew our life even when all life appears to have gone. This is a story of divine hope and on this celebration of All Saints I pray that we will take hope from our knowledge of God's loving purpose for us in this world and of his desire for us to share eternal life with all his saints in heaven.

### **Closing Prayer**

God, the source of all holiness and giver of all good things:  
may we who have shared at this table  
    as strangers and pilgrims here on earth  
be welcomed with all your saints  
    to the heavenly feast on the day of your kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Do join us next week for our services in church and online!**

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Prebendary Nigel Guthrie  
95 Howell Road  
Exeter EX4 4LH  
[nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com](mailto:nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com)