

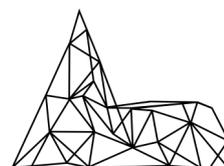
GRAPE

-VINE

July 2019

TO LIVE
LIKE
WITH
FOR

JESUS



**ALLSAINTS
HOOLE**

All Saints Messy Church



It has been my absolute joy to lead the team that have run a Messy Church here at All Saints for nearly 10 years. It has been quite a journey! Starting up in October 2009 on the 1st Thursday of each month, it became obvious after many years that after school wasn't a good time for working parents/carers to join in. We moved to a Sunday afternoon and also opened up the main hall for sports activities and challenges based on the theme of that month.

Although we have had very high numbers at times, over the last 2 years or so numbers have dropped and we are actually unsure why. The activities that we put on in our wonderful church centre has provided a great place for us all to learn about our faith through a variety of crafts, activities, 'Celebration' and lovely freshly cooked meals for everyone (thank you, Debbie). It has been a special place where there have been fabulous conversations and interaction, friendships made and faith forwarded.

Sadly I believe that it is time to close down our Messy Church to enable me, in the last year before I retire, to use my time where more help is needed in other All Saints groups.

A huge 'Thank You' goes to my wonderful, faithful helpers, some of whom have been helping since the beginning. Some are more 'crafty' than others, some are great at Welcoming people and getting people to sign in and put on their name badges (very useful – perhaps main church should do that!), others are great at chatting or leading a more prayerful/reflective activity and there are also those who help to serve the food and drinks and wash up and tidy away afterwards.

I will so miss my once a month Messy time but I do know that this is God's path for us all at the moment and we look to see what "new thing" he will lead us into in the years ahead.

We finish off the (school) year with a Picnic and Beach Clean at New Brighton on July 14th which will be a lovely end to our Messy time together.

Helen Ellis
June 2019

THE GARDEN GATE COMMUNITY

It has been 2 years, 5 months and 12 days since a group of us from All Saints took over plot 21 at Hoole allotments. At that time, plot 21 was a sea of brambles with a little hen house in one corner which the previous owner used to store her gardening tools in, all presided over by a large willow tree. All of this has now gone (though we do get the odd bit of bramble trying to make a comeback) - the brambles have been replaced with fruit and vegetables, instead of the hen house we have a proper shed and a greenhouse, and Mike almost single handedly dug out the willow tree, for which we are forever grateful.

We get some great produce from the plot - it is amazing how much extra flavour fresh fruit and veg has, and I get great satisfaction from sitting down to eat my dinner and thinking 'I grew this'. This year already we have harvested strawberries, broad beans, radishes, carrots and rhubarb. We have started learning over the last couple of years about what does and does not work on the plot - we now know that carrots work best in the raised beds (you may have seen the many-legged carrots which were our earlier attempts) and curly kale is not worth the time it takes to wash the bugs out of the curls! Others are becoming firm favourites - runner beans take little effort for a bumper crop, we have grown cucumbers twice the size of shop bought ones and beetroot is great as you can pickle it then keep eating it all year. Have a look in the Garden Gate folder at the back of church to see our progress throughout the year.



Coffee and cake at Ness Botanic Gardens

But it is not all about growing food. Our community is also growing - we support each other and pray for one another and the other plot holders around us. We swap extra produce with our plot neighbours or invite them over for a coffee to get to know them better. We have lunch or a social such as our recent trip to Ness Botanic Gardens and get to know each other better too.

I love being involved in the Garden Gate community for so many reasons - I love being out in the fresh air, I enjoy sowing seeds and watching them grow, and the group is like a second house group in the way we support one another. The allotments are such a peaceful place, you forget you are in a city. Sometimes in summer evenings I go down to the plot and sit and read my book. I don't have a proper garden, only a paved yard, so I really appreciate having this 'green' outdoor space. From the bench on our plot you have a view out over the allotments towards Chester - you can see the taller buildings like the Shot Tower poking up, and the Welsh mountains in the distance.

Do get in touch if you fancy joining us. You don't need to have any gardening experience or your own tools - we have plenty of those to go around (well the tools anyway!) We meet from 10-12 on Saturday and Monday mornings and stop for coffee and biscuits around 11.

The Hoole Allotments annual open day is on Sunday 21st July 10.30-4pm, complete with scarecrow competition, cake stall and entertainment, with proceeds split between the allotments association and the Hospice of the Good Shepherd. This would be a great time to come and see the Garden Gate Community plot, support local groups and have a fun Sunday afternoon out. We hope to see you there!

Heather Reed

PERI'S FAREWELL LETTER



We remember the new things and the first things so clearly, don't we? The first day of high school, the first time on an airplane. Our senses are heightened, hearts beat a little faster and the world looks strange and foreign through our wide eyes. I remember my first Sunday at All Saints in such a way. Standing at the front, John asked me why I was here to work with B-it and the youth, and I answered 'I don't really know. But God has brought me here, so I'm trusting he will show me what is in store, and how he wants to use me.' That was almost eight years ago. And oh what a journey it's been.

What I've learned

When I arrived, I thought, like many 18 year-olds do, that I knew lots. I quickly realised that I didn't. The first couple of years mostly consisted of being thrown in the deep end, and working out how to swim. With the help of Sam and others, and with some mistakes, I have gained a wealth of skills and experience that I know the Lord will use in the future. I have become a teacher, a mentor, a preacher, an encourager, a director and a team builder. I have also discovered who God has made me to be. He has softened my heart, shown me that it's ok to get things wrong, grown my heart for young people and instilled in me a love of theatre. I have learned how I work, how I relate to others, how I rest and how I play. He has awakened new gifts and showed me how to feed myself spiritually. Most of all, I have learned that I can do nothing apart from God. And I don't want to!

What I've loved

In many ways, working at All Saints has been my dream job. It has been my privilege to help children and young people grow in confidence and realise that they are beautifully and wonderfully made. My passion for theatre and creating shows has sky-rocketed. I so enjoy having a vision and seeing it come to life on stage. Sophie Hawker has been a joy to work with, and I have seen her grow as

a teacher and leader in the last couple of years. She has been a blessing to me and to B-it and I will so miss working with her. Walking alongside our young people has been an honour, and I will treasure the memories of special chats, sleepovers, Encounter and Soul Survivor. I have loved being on staff and working alongside others who have a deep love for All Saints and the community.

Of course I have loved being a part of All Saints. You are my family. There are far too many people to name, but there are a couple I need to mention. Firstly, I would not be the woman I am today if it wasn't for Sam D-H. Without his assurance of the Lord's voice speaking to him, I would not even be here. He has shown me what following and loving Jesus looks like - the highs and lows, and challenged me to step outside of my comfort zone in order to live in the fullness that Jesus has for me. I am so thankful for this brother in Christ. My first day on the job, I met with Anita Benson who was going to be my mentor for the year. Now almost eight years later, she is still guiding me with counsel, listening to my babbling chaotic thoughts and praying for me more than I know. She has been a constant support and encouragement and has given generously to me. Both her and Sam are an absolute gift. Please know, All Saints, that I am so thankful for your friendship, support, prayers and your encouragement. There will always be a special place in my heart for you.

Where I'm going

I am moving to Cambridge in September to be with my sister and brother in law. I will stay with them for a month or two while I find work and train to become a masseuse. It's something I've wanted to learn to do for years, so I'm excited to give it a go. Other than that, I have no firm plan, which is scary. However the Lord has been speaking to me over the past year about how his plans will be slowly revealed, so it's no surprise I can't see more than a few months ahead. This I know for sure, Jesus has already gone before me and I can trust him completely. I can't wait to experience more of his power at work in my life as I face new challenges with him. And I know that I'll be back to see you all; this isn't goodbye forever.

Heart Attitudes

It's now more than 50 years since Christiaan Barnard conducted the first heart transplant in Cape Town. Today surgeons carry out around 200 heart transplants every year in Britain alone.

Christianity is a religion of the heart. That doesn't mean that it's primarily a religion of feelings and emotions, although our emotions will be engaged by the truth and beauty of God. Rather, it's a religion which is internal and not just external, inward and not just outward conformity to a set of rules or rituals. The 'heart' in the Bible is the centre of our personality, the core of our being.

But as human beings, like those with heart disease who are in need of a transplant, we all need a new heart. The Bible describes our hearts as 'deceitful above all things and beyond cure' (Jeremiah 17:9). Jesus says that 'it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come' (Mark 7:21). It's all too easy to 'honour God with our lips while our hearts are far from him' (Isaiah 29:13).

The good news is that God offers to give us a new heart. 'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh' says the Lord in Ezekiel 36:26. He gives us a heart which loves God, which fears God, which finds its true joy in God, which knows God's peace, which is humble before God, and which puts its hope in God.

Cont'd

It's those heart attitudes that we are going to look at in our sermon series this July and August. Many of us have received the new heart that God gives. We have been 'born again' or 'born from above' (John 3:3, 7). God has come to live in us by his Holy Spirit. He is gradually changing us. But for us, it's still too easy to grow cold spiritually; to forsake our first love for Jesus (Revelation 2:4); to allow other loves to take his place. We need to 'guard our heart, for everything we do comes from it' (Proverbs 4:23) and this sermon series will challenge and help us to do that.

Some of us may not have received the new heart yet. We worship God week by week but our hearts are still far from him. We go through the motions as Christians, but there's no inner reality. The Christian life feels like a duty, a drudge; seeking to keep a set of rules in order to satisfy a distant God who is hard to please. This sermon series will help us to discover the joy of a relationship with God, a love that gladly responds to his love for us.

God cares about our hearts. It may be the most important thing God is saying to us at All Saints at the moment. Let's examine our hearts honestly. Let's cry out to God to change our hearts.

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