



ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'CATCH-UP CHURCH' NEWSLETTER

Sunday 1st November 2020 – All Saints Day

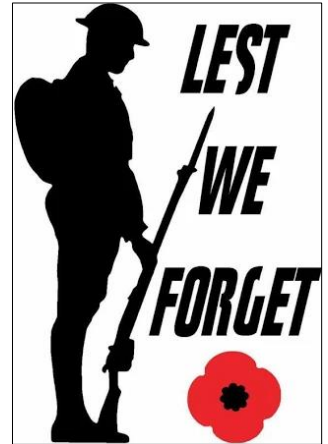


NEWS UPDATE

Remembrance Sunday

Next Sunday, 8th November, is Remembrance Sunday. We will be holding a remembrance service, starting at the usual time of 9.30am.

We are also going to run Junior Church on Remembrance Sunday for the first time since March! We are asking that for this first week back we have only children who are in Key-Stage 1 years at school, which is ages 4-7. Mixing different age groups is discouraged, and Dawn Edwards would like to keep things simple for this first session. Children who are older will remain with their parents in church.



The Junior Church will complete their own Remembrance Sunday activities in the back room, then connect with the adult service via video link just before the Act of Remembrance. They can show us what they have been doing via the video screen, then watch the trumpet playing and join in the two-minute silence remotely from the back room. The logistics of this may be challenging, but we possess the technology, and we can surely do this.

Cleaner Living Tip



One of the ways we can care for the planet is to educate our children. My hope is that they will grow up to understand how to care for God's world better than we have.

Louise Gover kindly lent me a board game which we have played a few times over half term. The game is called 'Endango,' and it involves having to save your endangered species in order to win. The game is full of educational tips, and we found it to be good fun. It is designed for age 6+.

Louise is happy to lend the game out to other church families – just let us know and we will pass it round. As Christmas approaches, it might be also be an idea for a parent or grandparent to buy as a gift. It is not the easiest game to get hold of, but if you search online for "*Elastic Earth Endango - Go Green To Save Animals*" you will find it available on amazon for £20.



THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

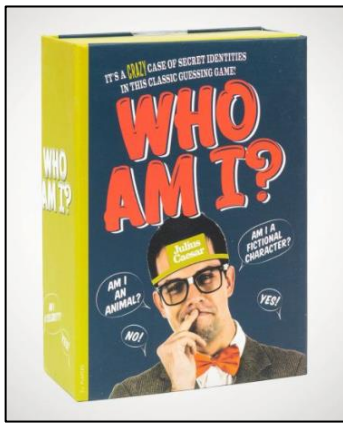
This week our message comes from Liz McClean who is curate at Christ Church, Fulwood. I admire the way she has kept it to the point. The bible passage is also nice and short!



Bible Reading – 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.

Who are we?



In more social times you might have played the game, *who am I?* Someone writes down a name, sticks it on your forehead, and you try to guess who you are. I have to admit in these past months my own sense of identity has taken a bit of a knock and left me feeling like an unwilling player in this game, questioning what really makes me me.



In all the intensity of ever evolving life restrictions I feel like many of the plans and purposes of pre-lockdown life have been somewhat forgotten and I detect a thread of nervousness in me for the future.

Perhaps some of you feel a little like me too. If that's the case, then the passage from 1 John 3:1-3 is just the tonic. This may be one of the shortest passages we read all year but each line cuts to the heart of a community that feels forgotten, fragile and fearful of the future. The thing about just having three lines is that we have to read between them to understand what's going on for the recipients of this letter. It's John's positive encouragements to the fellowship which perhaps best reveals their 'between the line' struggles. He tells them, *you are known to God*, because they feel forgotten by the world. He tells them, *you are named as children of God* because their identity feels fragile. He tells them, *you are much loved*, because something in their present reality is causing doubt to set in. Over all these anxieties John tells this community who they really are, *they are known, they are named, they are loved*. They are God's beloved children.

As we celebrate All Saints Day we recognise this is the point of continuity that exists between those John wrote his letter to and us today; we are all God's beloved children. We take our place in a long line of believers who put their hope in Jesus whilst struggling with the prospects of an unknown future. Though John admits

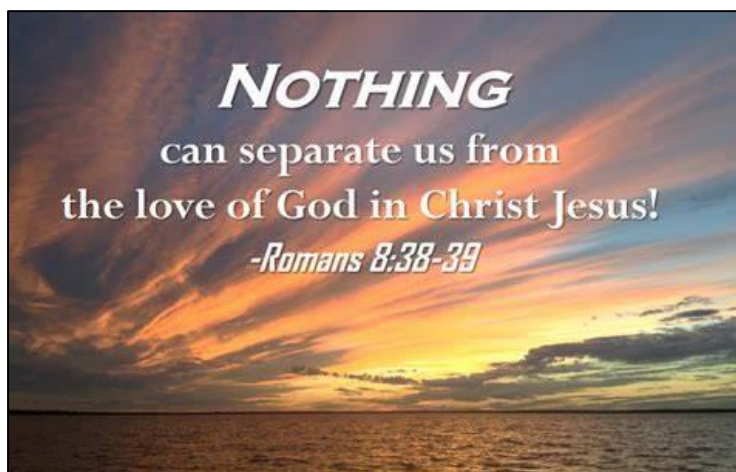
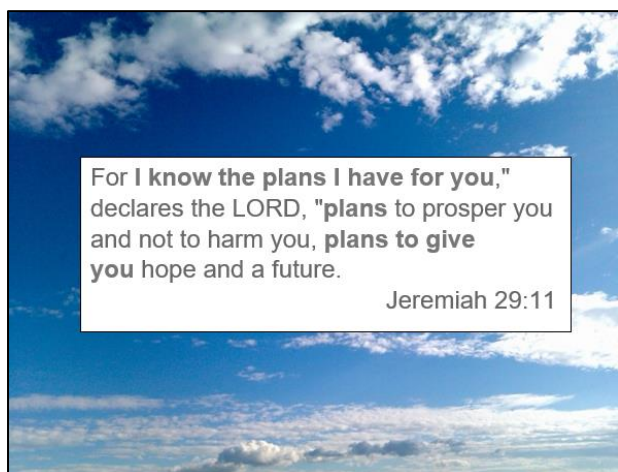
he doesn't know exactly what our future will look like he knows it will look like Jesus. Who we are now in this life and who we will be after death will follow the pattern of Jesus' life, resurrection, and glorification.



Jesus, the beloved Son of God, knew what it was to be human, to feel fragile, to be ignored and unrecognised by the world, but he also knew how to place his future hope in his Father. To put our hope in God through Jesus is to live in his likeness right now, and it's such a hopeful attitude as this which produces purity and holiness.

Jesus *is* our identity, which means that in every changing circumstance of life we can know who we are and remember the life purposes he has called us to. Nothing can ever steal this identity because nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Right now, we have a purpose to tell and show others who are in need of this hope that God knows, names and loves them too. We have a purpose to encourage each other as the body of Christ, as saints gathered together, that we know who we are because we know Him. We are children of God, known, named and loved.



Prayers – Written by Peter

Loving Heavenly Father, we thank you that you know us completely.

You know each of us by name, and you have made us your beloved children through the redeeming work of your Son Jesus Christ.

In these uncertain times help us remember that nothing can separate us from your love, and may we place our hope in Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Lord, as we take hold of our identity in you,
help us also to trust that our future is in your hands.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Lord of all history, on this All Saints day we thank you for those who have gone before us.
We give you thanks and praise for all whose example of love, faith, patience, and endurance has inspired us,
and in a moment of quiet we think of people who have made a difference to our life.

We think quietly of people we have known whose life and example we are thankful for.

Lord, as we thank you for them, may we look forward to that day when we will be united with all God's
people in the great communion of the saints.

Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

A PRAYER FROM THE BISHOP'S TASK GROUP:

**Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**