

Offa Mission Area Newsletter

November 2020

From your Mission Area Leader.....

As you may know we are in the middle of a Mission Area review. This is being carried out by the Diocese, and the findings will be sent to the bishop. The Mission Area will then need to look at the recommendations that have been made and use them to put together a plan for the MA going into 2021 and beyond. To do this we will need your ideas and concerns both as individuals and churches to work out how to move forward once COVID-19 becomes less of an issue. Please start thinking now, as your views are important as we look at the future of our churches.

Our Vision statement is:

Offa Mission Area. Seeking to serve God. Caring pastorally and spiritually for all. Working together for the growth of the kingdom.

Please pray for our Mission Area as we seek to serve God and to care for all those in our local communities. **Kate**

What a difference twenty-four hours makes.

Yesterday as I looked out from my study window over what was the old Brymbo steel works the sun was shining and the colours of autumn glistened through the showers and there was even a rainbow for a short time. Today it's dull and overcast one of the misty days associated with late autumn, the days of mellow fruitfulness are giving way to the changing seasons.

This is also true in the church's year, we are coming to the end of the long Trinity season and moving into a season of reflection and remembering. Over the coming weeks we will celebrate the Feast of All Saints and All Souls followed a week later by Remembrances weekend.

For many this is a difficult time and will be more so this year with the upheaval, change and uncertainty that the Covid 19 pandemic has brought, but I'd like to share with you a few of my memories of this time.

It's not been easy to choose which ones to share with personal service in the QARNNS and then as an army wife traveling around the world, I have many to choose from. But I'm going to start with my earliest memories.

I was born and brought up in post war London, Armistice Day, 11th November and especially the 11th hour of 11th month was special even for a child. Everything stopped for 2 minutes silence. The Saturday closest to Armistice Day, started as a time of fun, from earliest childhood as a family we'd head into the city for the Lord Mayors Show.

Then, much as today the parade of service personnel, youth organisations, the Pike Men, Gog and Magog and finally the Lord Mayor in his splendid horse draw coach where interspersed with floats from which were thrown all type of sweets and fruit supplied by the numerous livery companies. I remember the joy of catching not just the sweets but an orange and the envy of those around you who hadn't been so lucky.

It was only many years later that I came to realise that the service personnel on parade that morning went on to parade in the Royal Albert Hall for the Festival of Remembrance that night, and the following morning lined Whitehall for the service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph. That the fun of the morning gave way to the serious responsibility of remembrance.

To remember is to re- member: to bring the past into the present.

We face the changing seasons with all the uncertainty the pandemic has brought, but there is throughout all this a constant. God is and has been with us throughout and will continue guide us to become the church he wants us to be.

As we look back over the past nine months with all the curtailed celebrations and look forward to an uncertain year ahead, and the changes which we personally, within society, and as a church community may have to embraced to allow us to return to some semblance of normality. We should embrace the opportunity for change, looking to the past but moving forward to build Gods kingdom here in the Offa Mission Area. - Heather

Christian Aid Advent and Christmas Appeal

This year, churches are being invited to join **in a moment of solidarity and hope on Advent Sunday, 29 November** by using the carol '*When out of poverty is born*' in their worship and taking a collection for Christian Aid. The hymn, which is freely available to use from caid.org.uk/christmasresources celebrates Mary's faith in the Magnificat and begins with the words '*When out of poverty is born a dream that will not die*'.

To find out more about Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal, including how to act for climate justice, visit caid.org.uk/hope .

Prayer for the week

God our Saviour;

We give thanks for freedom to express our beliefs, choose our path in life and participate in our communities.

Open our eyes and hearts to the plight of all who do not, through law or circumstances, enjoy such liberty; but suffer persecution, abuse and oppression.

Strengthen all efforts to overcome these persistent evils, that the whole human race may come to know and experience your loving care and perfect will.

Amen.