



# The Benefice of Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme

30 October 2022

## All Saints'

**Today's service was put together by Alison**

### Preparation

### Call to Worship

Holy God, who calls your people into one beloved community,  
who teaches us the way of peace through life together,  
who fills us with visions of your eternal reign:  
as we now celebrate the communion of saints,  
pour into our hearts the power of Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### *Silence is kept*

The Lord is here  
**His Spirit is with us.**

### Call to Confession

For the peace and unity of the saints,  
trusting in the promise of grace,  
let us confess our sin to God and to one another.

### Prayer of Confession

**God of the covenant,  
who calls all people to reconciliation,  
you have made us members of the very body of Christ;  
yet we persist in wounding that body  
with our divisions, our suspicions, and our neglect.  
Forgive us, and teach us to nurture unity and peace.  
For the sake of Jesus Christ  
and the world he came to save. Amen.**

## Assurance of Forgiveness

In the great compassion of our God,  
the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus has shown us  
God's forgiveness for our sins.  
Therefore, I declare to you  
the entire forgiveness for all your sins  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## The Collect

O ALMIGHTY God,  
who hast knit together thine elect  
in one communion and fellowship,  
in the mystical body  
of thy Son Christ our Lord:  
Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints  
in all virtuous and godly living,  
that we may come to those unspeakable joys,  
which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## The Readings

### The First Reading: Ephesians 1:11-end

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit<sup>[f]</sup> of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in

order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

**Thanks be to God for the gift of his word.**

**The Gospel Reading: Luke 6:20-31**

Looking at his disciples, Jesus said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now,  
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you,  
when they exclude you and insult you  
and reject your name as evil,  
because of the Son of Man.

“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven.  
For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

“But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have already received your comfort.

Woe to you who are well fed now,  
for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,  
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

**Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word.**

### Reflection by Liz

In the past few weeks, we have had some beautiful sunny days when the sunlight has been quite dazzling. It gives a whole new view of the world around us in this autumn season. One of the things that I particularly like to see on such days is the way that the sun accentuates the colours on the stained glass in churches. The colours become so vibrant that the pictures stand out more vividly than ever and as the light streams through, the colours are reflected onto the walls and surfaces around them. As well as admiring the workmanship in the stained glass, it is also fascinating to identify the Bible stories they represent or, in some cases, the saints who have a special connection with the church.

Each year when it comes around to celebrating All Saints, I resort to looking on the internet for information about saints and become enthralled as I discover the stories of different saints and the groups they represent. This year, I was especially pleased to discover St Philip Neri, an Italian priest from the sixteenth century who is the patron saint of joy and laughter. (though the pictures that were used with his description hardly reflected that – maybe it was a deep inner joy!) A timely reminder that saints can be like ordinary people and may not always like to be captured in pictures! Whether it's being patron saints of countries or more specific things like cobblers, glovemakers or gout sufferers, there are numerous saints who are widely recognised or at least, named in lists of saints. But on All Saints, we celebrate the lives of all the Saints, known and unknown.

It feels strange to say they are unknown as obviously they must have been known to some people around them and definitely, they would be known to God. But there are many people who would not be widely known and yet, would be considered saints. Simply, they are people who are loved by God and who let that love work in their lives and shape the people that they become.

Sometimes, as in the case of some of the more famous saints that may lead to some amazing acts or miracles, but that is not always the case. What matters is God's love and the effect it has on individuals.

I'm reminded of a **pumpkin story**: "What is it like to be a Christian saint?" "It is like being a Halloween pumpkin. God picks you from the field, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off you. Then he cuts off the top and scoops out the yucky stuff. He removes the pulp of impurity and injustice and seeds of doubt, hate, and greed. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light of love inside you to shine for the entire world to see." This is the Christian idea behind the carved pumpkins during the Halloween season. It seems quite dramatic, but certainly gives an idea of how God's love can change people's lives.

Whether it is by a dramatic revelation of God's love or a gradual realisation of the power of such love, the common factor is undoubtedly God's love. For all the saints, both known and unknown, that is the key factor. Their lives are lived in the certainty of that love. They know that God's love surrounds and upholds them through anything that life may thrust upon them. No doubt, there will have been people that you have known who have been secure and grounded in God's love, who have known the reassurance of his constant presence in their lives in both joyful and difficult times. They may not have been depicted in stained glass windows, but their lives will have brought the light of love into the lives of those they mixed with.

Wonderfully, God's love is there for all people. We, like those saints we remember, need to trust in the One who gives it so generously and to live in God's love. Quite often, the Bible uses the word "abide" – to abide in God's love with its image of being at home in God's love, truly settled in his love. What an amazing picture – and how reassuring for all parts of our lives. As we live in such generous love, we pray that our lives will begin to reflect that love and light to those around us.

So, as we remember All Saints, may we be inspired by the lives of the Saints, give thanks for those special people we have known who have been channels of God's love in our lives and may we commit ourselves to abiding in God's love so that our lives may reflect God's love for those we meet.



St Hilda and St Oswald  
At St Saviour's, Harden



## Affirmation of Faith

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### Prayers of Intercession with Judith

Let us pray to the God who can love sinners into saints. Thank you Father, for the faithful prayers of so many over the generations; for the lifetimes of quiet godliness; for the struggles bravely borne and the witness of strong faith.

**Make us all worthy of our calling.**

Thank you Father, for all peace-makers and those who strive for justice and reconciliation. Thank you for those who work to relieve suffering, giving care and attention to those in pain, ill health and sorrow. Sooth those who are suffering and comfort those who mourn.

**Make us all worthy of our calling.**

Thank you Father, for those who want to bring about change and a better management of the world's resources. Bring wisdom and effectiveness to discussions at the forthcoming COP27 Conference as it meets next month. Thank you for those who are working to help the poor and needy through food banks and the provision of warm spaces. Help us to work together and fill us with compassion for those in need.

**Make us all worthy of our calling.**

Thank you Father, for the leaders of all our churches, the ministry team in the Benefice, those who by faithful proclamation of your word enable us to build upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets. We give thanks for all the people who make up your churches in our local villages and pray for Helen Keighley whose Service of Ordination is being held this weekend. Empower us all by the gift of your holy and life giving Spirit, that we may be transformed into the likeness of Christ from glory to glory.

**Make us all worthy of our calling.**

Thank you for the love and encouragement we have received through the years from those who have died in faith and are remembered with great affection. Thank you for all the saints of heaven who join us as we praise God in all his holiness.

Merciful Father,  
**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,  
our Risen Saviour Jesus Christ.**



### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us,  
lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory  
are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

### **Closing Prayer**

Love your enemies,  
pray for those who oppose you,  
answer evil with good,  
gives to those in need;  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

### **Blessing**

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ  
give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation  
to live in hope today and always.  
And the blessing of God Almighty,  
The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit,  
be with you and remain with you always.  
**Amen**