

Dear Church Family,

As we welcome the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, we find ourselves fully embraced by the warmth of late summer and the steady rhythm of Ordinary Time. This week, our gospel reading invites us to look outward with compassion, reminding us that Christ calls us to love our neighbours unconditionally. Jesus shares with us the profound truth that true faith is revealed through active mercy and love for one another:

"A Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine." — Luke 10:33-34

 **Our Prayers:** We continue to hold Reverend Steven Young in our steadfast prayers, asking for continued strength, comfort, and steady progress in his health and recovery. Our thoughts, hearts, and prayers also remain with Father Matthew and his son, Christian. May God guide and protect Reverend Steven and his family as he leads our Parish, and may his ministry continue to flourish for years to come.

We also offer a prayer of deep gratitude and blessing for Reverend Louise. Lord, thank You for her dedicated service, her compassionate heart, and the warmth she brings to our community. We pray for her continued good health, strength, and well-being. Grant her refreshing rest, time with her family, abundant energy, and a deep sense of peace in her daily life. May she always feel uplifted and supported by the same love she so generously shares with all of us.

Amen.

 **Our Sunday Service:** August 23rd, Twelfth Sunday after Trinity. We look forward to welcoming you to worship together across the parish this Sunday for our unified service:

- **10.00 am:** Parish Service at Holy Cross with Guest Speaker Gary Bentley of The Christian Police Association. Followed by sandwiches and cake.

Weekday Eucharist, Prayers & Open Church

- **Monday 24th August:** 9.30 am Morning Prayer, All Saints
- **Tuesday 25th August:** Sorry, no Holy Communion at Holy Cross
- **Wednesday 26th August:** 10.00 am Holy Communion, St Nicholas
- **Thursday 27th August:** 9.30 am Morning Prayer, St Nicholas
- **Thursday 27th August:** 3.00 pm Holy Communion with Songs of Praise, St Michael and All Angels
- **Friday 28th August:** 12.30 pm Holy Communion and Open Church (from 12.00), All Saints

Can you spare an hour? We are always looking for volunteers to keep our beautiful churches open to the public during the week. If you can help, please contact Reverend Steven for details, or reply to this email with "Volunteer" in the Subject line.

Confirmations 2026/27

Following a discussion at the PCC in July, it was agreed to seek a confirmation service to be held within the parish in the spring of next year. This has been agreed by the Bishop of Hertford, and we are awaiting a firm date, but we very much look forward to celebrating people's faith decisions in the midst of our local community. This will mean that we will be holding a confirmation course [early next year], and we look forward to hosting the confirmation service locally for the first time in a number of years. However, if anyone is keen to be confirmed this year, there is the possibility of attending the confirmation service at the Cathedral on 24 October, with a confirmation course in preparation beginning on 30 August.

 **Dates for your diaries:** Our next key Parish Service is:

- **Sunday, September 13th 10.00 am at Holy Cross** as we celebrate our Patronal Festival! We are delighted that the service will be led by the Right Revd Jane Mainwaring, Bishop of Hertford. This special Parish Service will be a double celebration, as we also welcome and formally install our Team Vicar, Reverend Louise Collins. Come and share in this joyful milestone for our church community as we look forward to the next chapter of our journey together. All are welcome!

 **A Moment of Reflection:** In this week's Gospel from Luke chapter 10, Jesus shares the well-loved Parable of the Good Samaritan. When a lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbour?", Jesus shifts the focus from setting boundaries on our duty to actively showing mercy. The priest and the Levite pass by on the other side, but the unexpected outsider—the Samaritan—stops, binds up the traveller's wounds, and ensures his full recovery at personal cost.

In a world that can often feel exhausting, frantic, fractured, or divided, we are called to be communities of radical peace and active grace here in Elstree and Borehamwood. True Christian discipleship goes beyond mere words or pious intentions; it urges us to cross social divides, offer practical aid, and show tangible care to anyone in need.

- **Crossing Divides:** Is there someone in your daily life or local community whom you usually overlook or pass by? How can you show them Christlike care this week?
- **Boundless Mercy:** How can our church community act as a refuge of healing and practical support for neighbours in distress?

May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rest upon you and those you love this week and always.

With every blessing,

Alana,

On behalf of the Parish of Elstree and Borehamwood

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. *Matthew 5.10-12*

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