

Rector's Ramblings – October 2025 (The Light in the Long Nights)

My dear friends,

As I sit to write this month's contribution, a familiar coolness has begun to creep into the air. The mornings are a little crisper, the evenings draw in sooner, and the trees in our churchyard's are starting to blush with the fiery colours of autumn. It's a beautiful, yet poignant, time of year, as we witness the slow, inevitable turn of the seasons. The vibrant greens of summer give way to the golden hues of autumn, a gentle reminder that nothing in this world is permanent.

I always feel a sense of melancholy as the nights lengthen. The long, light evenings of summer, filled with the hum of bees and the late songs of birds, now feel like a distant memory. This growing darkness can sometimes feel heavy, and it's easy to find ourselves a bit low as we brace for the months ahead. But even in this transition, there is a profound beauty and a spiritual truth to be found. The natural world is entering a time of rest and preparation, drawing inward before the new life of spring. It's a cycle that mirrors our own spiritual journeys. Sometimes we need to retreat, to rest, and to reflect in the quiet dark before we can bloom again.

As we move through October, we approach a time of remembrance that offers a different kind of light. At the end of the month, we have Halloween, or All Hallows' Eve, which is a wonderful opportunity for community fun and festivities. But it's also the prelude to something more profound: All Saints' Sunday on 2nd November, we celebrate the lives of all the saints, not just the famous ones you see in stained-glass windows, but every faithful person who has lived and died in Christ. It's a day to remember the 'great cloud of witnesses' (Hebrews 12:1) who have gone before us.

This is a powerful message for the darker nights of the year. When the world feels shadowed, we are reminded of the radiant light of Christ that shone in the lives of ordinary people—your parents, grandparents, a beloved friend or mentor, or a faithful neighbour. Their lives, lived with faith and love, are a testament that the light of Christ is never extinguished. It is passed from one generation to the next, burning brightly in the darkest corners of the world.

So, as you snuggle up with a warm cup of tea on a chilly evening, remember this. The darkness is only a part of the journey. The light of the saints, the light of Christ, and the light of our shared faith shine on, a beacon of hope and a promise that new life will always follow. Let us carry that light with us, sharing it with those around us, so that even in the lengthening nights, our community may be a place of warmth, hope, and peace.

With every blessing,

Mark

The Revd Mark Woodrow (Rector)