

Rector's Ramblings – October 2026 (Autumn Bangers)

As summer gradually gives way to a breathtaking tapestry of gold, amber, and russet, October arrives to quieten the rhythm of our parish lives.

Whenever autumn returns, my mind invariably drifts back to my primary school days and those morning assemblies filled with the energetic singing of "Autumn Days". Some of you will no doubt remember the nostalgic refrain: *"Autumn days when the grass is jewelled, and the silk inside a chestnut shell..."* It was always sung with such gusto by children who were delighted by the simple joys of the changing season and thanking God for his creation.

(If you want a reminder <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf5AfKdKFp4>)

Looking back, the hymn captures something wonderfully honest about this time of year. There is an unmistakable pleasure in the return of robust, hearty autumn meals. After months of light summer salads, there is immense comfort in bringing back proper winter dinners—a steaming homemade casserole bubbling on the stove, or a generous plate of sausage and mash with rich onion gravy. These are simple meals, yet they warm the body and nourish the soul as the chilly evening air sets in.

Outside, the natural world invites us to pause and appreciate its quiet splendour. For me, October brings my favourite time to head outdoors for walks through the woods. There is a playful, childlike delight in kicking through the crisp, fallen leaves, watching the sunlight filter through the fading canopy, and inhaling the earthy scent of the changing woodland (and if it is followed by a pint in a pub, even better!). But in those moments, surrounded by nature's quiet transition, it feels impossible not to sense the presence of something larger and infinitely gracious at work in our world.

Yet, autumn is fundamentally a season of twilight and preparation. The clocks will soon go back, drawing the dark nights around us a little earlier each evening. The brisk winds outside urge us to draw the curtains, settle in by the fire (or turn up the central heating), and embrace the quiet warmth of home. It becomes a time for peaceful evenings spent with a good book, enjoying the slow pace that winter's approach brings.

Scripture reminds us in Ecclesiastes that *"to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."* As the daylight shortens, October offers us a precious opportunity to slow down and reflect. Just as the earth prepares for its winter rest, we too are invited to look back on the busyness of the year gone by, to count our blessings, and to cultivate a quiet space within ourselves for prayer and contemplation.

As we move deeper into this season of twilight and gather around our tables, may we carry with us a spirit of gratitude for the harvest, for the warmth of our homes, and for the comforting fellowship of our community.

I wish you all a peaceful and blessed October.

Mark

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