

November 2026

The Revd Sarah Watson writes...



A season of hope

Remember, remember the 5th of November! Beyond Guy Fawkes, November is a month that invites us to remember. On Remembrance Day, we pause to honour those who gave their lives in war, to pray for peace in our world, for those serving in our armed forces, and for those who continue to suffer the consequences of conflict.

Before Remembrance Day, the Church celebrates All Saints' Day (All Hallows) on 1 November, followed by All Souls' Day on 2 November. These days can easily be overlooked amidst the pumpkins and costumes of Halloween, itself a shortening of All Hallows' Eve.

When we hear the word "saint", we may think of great figures from Christian history; one of my heroes of faith is St Hild. Yet All Saints' Day celebrates all those who have faithfully followed Christ and now share in the fullness of God's presence. The writer to the Hebrews (12:1) describes the "great cloud of witnesses" surrounding us as we run the race of faith. Some are remembered in history books, but many are ordinary people whose faith shaped our own lives people who prayed for us, encouraged us, taught us about Jesus, and showed us what Christian faith looks like.

All Souls' Day gives us an opportunity to remember those whom we love but see no longer. We bring our memories, gratitude, grief, and prayers before God, trusting that those who have died are safe in his eternal care.

We also begin to look forward to Advent, remembering Christ's first coming as a child in Bethlehem and knowing that, because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, death does not have the final word. Yet Advent is also about looking forward to Christ's return and the full establishment of God's Kingdom. The prophet Isaiah (2:4) gives us a vision of that future: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Likewise, Revelation (21:4) points to a time when God "will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more."

This is the hope that sustains us. November is a season for remembering, grieving, and lamenting, but it is also a season of hope. I invite you to take a moment to remember and give thanks for those who have shaped your faith, to pray for those who mourn, and for peace in our world. Above all, may we be people of hope, encouraged by those who have gone before us and inspired to follow Christ faithfully in our own generation.

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