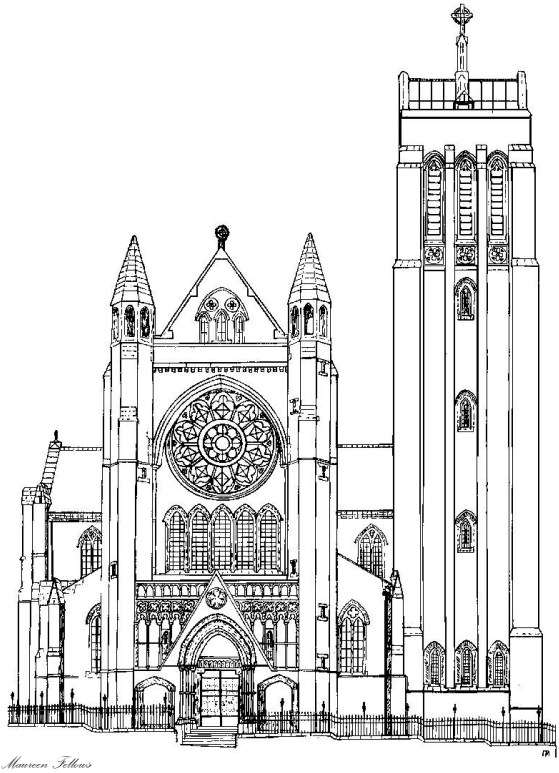
The Church of
St Alban the Martyr
Birmingham 12

St ALBAN AND St PATRICK
PARISH MAGAZINE



November
2026
£1

Church of S Alban the Martyr

Conybere Street, Birmingham

(Traditional Anglo-Catholic)

(www.saintalban.co.uk)

Vicar:

Fr Jacob Pallett 07510 270381
St Alban's Vicarage, 120 Stanhope Street,
Birmingham B12 0XB frjacobpallett@gmail.com

Sunday Services

Solemn Choral Mass 10.00 a.m.
Evening Choral Service 6.00 p.m.
(Usually the fourth Sunday of the month — see the Music List)

Mission Wednesday

Said Mass at 10.00 a.m.: Followed by Open Church 'tea and toast' in St Patrick's Room

Confessions: By appointment

Authorized Eucharistic Ministers *(Bishop's Permission)*

Mrs Verna Smith-Broadbent
Mrs Amanda Cadman ☎: 0121 624 3865

Churchwardens

Dr Christopher A. Smith
219, Gristhorpe Road,
Selly Oak
Birmingham B29 7SP
☎:07305 320968
chris.smith-sammons@blueyonder.co.uk

Mrs Amanda Cadman
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From The Vicarage…

'Remembering' is the theme that comes to mind for November. We look back over the last month and back into the summer that has now passed, and we can be thankful for all the good things that we have seen happening around us. October was a busy month with a regular pattern of activities. Our musical director, Angela, gave the final Pearson Organ Concert for this year, and it was very well received, with people visiting St Alban's especially to hear Angela's recital.

Angela was presented with flowers at the end of her recital.
More on the Concert Series on p 17

This was a good way to end this year's concert series. It was good to hear many compliments and comments of appreciation from visitors for the community that gathers here. A lot of work goes into planning and offering hospitality to visitors, and also the tidying up afterwards! In a community, just like that of a theatre company, everyone's part is very important for the show to go on, and so we can be grateful to each other for the rôle we play in offering a welcome to others. God has given us a community with a variety of gifts, and we continue to use our gifts to God's glory

As part of its gift to others, St Alban's needs to be a place where people can come and try something Anglo-Catholic for the first time in an environment that is safe, inclusive and supportive. In October, we welcomed the Assistant Curate of Much Wenlock, Fr Sam Rigby, who is on place-ment with the Anglo-Catholic Mission Project. Fr Sam has been with us to preach and to officiate at Evensong and Benediction. Please do pray for Fr Sam, who will be with us periodically during his six-week placement in Birmingham. Our tradition, with its rich liturgical and missionary life of faith, has a lot to offer. I hope this will be a memorable time for Fr Sam (for all the right reasons) as well as a fruitful time in his own vocational journey. I'm sure everyone will enjoy having an Assistant Curate around the place and make him feel very welcome.

November takes us deeper into remembrance, where we bring to the fore the memories of those whom we love, and whose lives have had a significant impact on ours. The 1st of November is All Saints' Day, and so we will be giving thanks for the holy ones of God who have inspired us. We give thanks for their lives and for all that they do for us in the power of prayer, caught up in the mystery of Salvation. Monday 2nd November will be All Souls' Day, when we give thanks for all of those whom we have known and loved and who now rest in eternity with God. The 8th of November is Remembrance Sunday, when we will be remembering those who died during times of war. For a number of people who live in our parish, war is very much a reality in the lives of their families, with people travelling to escape the horrors of conflict.

This Remembrance Day, the children in the school will be praying for peace and an end to war as we make our act of remembrance in the school atrium before the parish war memorial.

As the days become shorter, the nights longer, and the weather colder, let us also remember those who will be alone, and who will be in need of warmth and companionship.

Above all, as we remember and as we pray, let us call to mind the great mystery of Salvation, which is our inheritance with all the saints and which we experience as the unconditional mercy, kindness, and compassion of God. *Fr Jacob*

Forthcoming Services and Events

Mission Wednesdays

This is a six week course, which began on October 28th, titled**:**

"Called to Care: Christian Social Teaching Today"

This was created as part of the Anglo-Catholic Mission Project.

The five remaining sessions will be on Wednesdays at 10.45 a.m. after the morning said Mass, on 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th November; and 2nd December.

All Saints' Day

Sunday 1st November: 10.00 a.m. Sung Mass.

Saintly icons and relics can be brought to church on this Sunday and placed on the side altars. These will be visited during the procession around the church on All Saints' Day.

All Souls' Day

Monday 2nd November — 7.30 p.m. Sung Mass.

Please remember to added names of the dearly departed to the annual list so that we can pray for those who have died, and undertake this act of charity together.

Parish Festivals 2027

The PCC have agreed the dates for the Parish Patronal Festivals will be on the following Saturdays at 11.00 a.m. followed by a Parish Lunch.

Saturday 13th March — St Patrick's Day Celebration.

Saturday 26th June — St Alban's Celebration.

Saturday 18th September — Holy Cross, Dedication Celebration.

Heritage Open Days 2027

Once again, after a very successful Heritage Open Week, participating in both the national and local Birmingham Heritage Open Day, we will be taking part next year. These are the dates advertised for next year:

Friday, September 10th to Sunday, September 19th, 2027.

St Alban's Gift Day 2026

Our annual Gift Day makes a major contribution to the General Fund of the Parochial Church Council, supplementing the regular Planned Giving and Sunday collections. It is from this General Fund that we pay all ordinary Church expenses, including heating (when we have any!), lighting, the broadband connection that enables us to stream services over Zoom and our contribution to the Diocesan Common Fund towards the cost of providing our Parish Priest.

Last year our Gift Day achieved a total of £10,270 and Gift Aid on eligible donations added another £2,480, together making 30.7% of the total receipts of £41,504 for the General Fund. Our General Fund ended with a small surplus of £727.

This year, the income for the General Fund to the end of September has been £1,959 more than for the same period last year, while expenditure has been less by £83, so our position appears to be £2,042 better than last year. However, in past years our Printing (or Litho) Unit was regularly able to contribute £2,000 from the profit made on external work undertaken by Maureen and Edward. This year although Maureen has not been able to continue to undertake external work. She has suggested the transfer of £2,000 to the General Fund from the Printing Fund this year, as a large reserve is no longer needed to cover replacement of the printing equipment. However, in future we will need to replace this regular source of income through giving.

Our Gift Day starts on Sunday 22nd November, the feast of Christ the Universal King, but we continue to accept contributions until the end of December. If you are able, please donate generously, as we need a total similar to last year.

There are several ways in which you can donate remotely:

- Directly to our account at HSBC, sort code 40-11-17, account number 31004948, account name St Alban's PCC, including your name and **"Gift Day"** to identify your donation.
- By sending your cheque payable to **"St Alban's PCC"** to me at 219 Gristhorpe Road, Birmingham B29 7SP, to Amanda Cadman at 55 Wychall Lane, Birmingham B38 8TB, or to Fr Jacob at St Alban's Vicarage, 120 Stanhope Street, Birmingham B12 0XB.
- By scanning this QR code with your smartphone:
  (We are charged a 2.5% handling fee by SumUp.)

If you are able to visit the church you can donate in these ways:

- By putting your donation in one of the special Gift Day envelopes available at the back of church and placing it on the collection plate or giving it to Fr Jacob, to Amanda Cadman, or to me.
- Through a contact-less card donation. To use this method, please see me.
  (We are charged a 1.67% handing fee by SumUp.)

If you pay enough in income tax, please remember that under the Gift Aid system the PCC can reclaim basic rate tax on your donation at no cost to you. At the time of writing, this is worth an extra 25p for each pound given. If you have already signed a Gift Aid Declaration allowing the PCC to reclaim tax on all donations made until further notice (as most of our regular donors have), please be sure that your name is attached to your donation, by whatever means you make it. If you have not already completed one, please ask for a form to complete to cover your donation and any future donations.

Chris Smith, Churchwarden and PCC Treasurer
20th October 2026

From "THE GOSPELLER and monthly record of S. Alban the Martyr, Birmingham" for August 1885:

THE CHURCH OF S. ALBAN-THE-MARTYR, Conybere Street, is open for Divine Service according to the order of the Church of England, under license of the Bishop of Worcester. Its 1,000 kneelings are all free and unappropriated. The Services are dependent on the Alms of the Faithful for their suport.

SUNDAYS.

Holy Communion	7	a.m.
Holy Communion	8	"
Mattins	10.30	"
Holy Communion, with Sermon	11	"
Children's Service, with Catechising	4	p.m.
Litany	5	"
Evensong and Sermon	6.30	"

WEEK DAYS.

Holy Communion, Daily except Thursday,	7.30	a.m.
Holy Communion, Thursday	8	"
Mattins, Daily	11	"
Litany, Wednesday and Friday	7.30	p.m.
Evensong, Daily, Choral	8	"

Sermon at Evensong on Friday. The Church is open all day for Private Prayer. The Clergy may be seen after any Service.

CLERGY. { Rev. JAMES S. POLLOCK, 352, Moseley Road.
Rev. THOMAS B. POLLOCK, 352, Moseley Road.
Rev. JOHN H. C. COWAN, 266, Moseley Road.

CHURCHWARDENS. { H. T. RATCLIFF, Ladywood House.
W. H. SPROSTON, 58, Bristol Street.

VERGER. —CHARLES WINDRIDGE, 13, Dymoke Street.

FOUNDATION OF THE WORK.

When the Rev. Dr. Oldknow sanctioned the beginning of the Mission by the Rev. James S. Pollock and the Rev. Thomas B. Pollock, with a few zealous lay-workers, in the year 1865; there was no Church or place of worship, no Dissenting Chapel, no Public Elementary School, no endowment, no grant for any purpose, — there were only about 5,000 poor people living in unmade streets. The first Mission Chapel was opened on Sept. 14, 1865: we are about to celebrate its Twentieth Anniversary.

THE PARISH —

was founded under what is known as the "New Parishes Act" or "Sir Robert Peel's Act." The five Trustees are the Right Hon. Earl Beauchamp, the Very Rev. the Dean of Lincoln, H. T. Ratcliff, W. H. Sproston, J. G. Talbot, M.P. Endowment, £150 a year; for providing which the promoters paid £3,000 to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1871.

S. ALBAN'S DISTRICT—

is bounded on the north by Moseley Street; on the west by Alcester Street, Vaughton Street, and a line taking in both sides of Vaughton Street, south; on the south by Longmore Street, and a line leaving out both sides of Belgrave Street; and on the east by Moseley Road.

POPULATION OF S. ALBAN'S DISTRICT

in 1865, about 5,000; in 1881 it was 12,723; in 1885 it is about 13,000. The population of Holy Trinity in 1861, including the whole of the present districts of Holy Trinity, S. Alban's, and All Saints', Small Heath, was 13,683,— about 700 more than the present population of S. Alban's. The population of the same district in 1881 was as follows: — Holy Trinity, 12,563; S. Alban's, 12,723; All Saints', Small Heath, 9,123; Total, 24,409. Increase during twenty years, 10,726, nearly half the combined populations of the two new districts.

HOLY BAPTISM —

on the first Sunday of each month, at 4 p.m., and every Thursday, at 8 p.m. during Evensong. No Fee of any kind for Baptism. Churchings a quarter of an hour before any Service, except Evensong on Sunday and Friday: no fee, but offerings may be given.

Baptisms during the half-year ending June 30, 1885: — January, 65; February, 56; March, 66; April, 55; May, 64; June, 59; Total, 365. Of this number 26 were Adults, and 18 were Infants privately baptized. Two Baptisms for every day of the year so far.

THE CHOIR.

From the commencement of the Mission Work in 1865, S. Alban's has always had a *Voluntary* Choir of *Communicants.* Manuals used: Helmore's Psalter and Canticles; Hymns Ancient and Modern.

Choir Master and Organist: — T. J. Woodall, A.C.O.

S. ALBAN'S MISSION,

Leopold Street. Divine Service on Sunday Evenings at seven o'clock, under license of the Bishop of Worcester. Services are also held at S. Patrick's Mission, Highgate Street; and Holy Cross Mission, Moseley Street.

S. ALBAN'S CHURCH SOCIETY.

Members are Communicants at S. Alban's, who sign the Roll, receive the Card, attend the Meetings, and say the short Daily Prayer.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS —

at S. Alban's Schools, Leopold Street; S. Patrick's, Highgate Street; and Holy Cross, Moseley Street, at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Children's Services after School Teaching. Clothing and Saving Clubs. A Bible Class for young men is held in a separate room at the Boys' School, Leopold Street, every Sunday at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Two Bible Classes for young women are held in separate rooms at the Church in Conybere Street, every Sunday at 3 p.m.

At the Collections on Trinity Sunday the Sunday Schools of S. Alban's District contributed £2 6s. 8d. to the Children's Hospital, Birmingham.

DAY SCHOOLS.

Five Schools: for Boys, Girls, and Infants, in Leopold Street; for Girls and Infants, in Highgate Street. All these Schools are under Diocesan and Government Inspection, and are instructed by highly qualified certificated Teachers. Total accommodation, 1263.
The Schools break up for Summer Holidays on Thursday, July 23, at 4 p.m., and commence work on Monday, Aug. 17, at 9 a.m.

S. ALBAN'S PAROCHIAL ASSOCIATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH UNION.

The Chairman, Rev. James S. Pollock, has received a letter from the Organizing Secretary E.C.U., Rev. T. O. Marshall, urging the collection of the subscriptions due by Associates for the year 1885, Subscriptions should be paid to C. F. Goddard, 91, Balsall Heath Road, Secretary of the S. Alban's P. A., or to the Chairman.

ANNUAL EXCURSION.

About 1,121 went to Kingsbury by Special Train: Adults, 163; Children, 958. The children who had tea in the Schoolroom numbered 1,143. Total Number of Children entertained on the two days, 2,101; against 2,080 last year. After the trouble that has been taken and the result attained, there ought to be no difficulty in paying off the debt of £14. Will some who did not help us in June send their offerings now?

S. ALBAN'S DEPÔT —

Conybere Street, opposite the South Porch of the Church, is open for the sale of Bibles, Prayer Books, Hymn Books, Periodicals, &c. Bibles from 6d., New Testament from 1d., Prayer Books from 2d. Hymn Books from 1d., Prayers and Hymns together, 6d., 9d., & 1s. *"Gospeller" ½d & 1d. "Sunday Friend," for Children, Illustrated, ½d. "New and Old," "Penny Post," "Church Times," "National Church,"* 1d. each, &c. Two-pence in the Shilling off the price of new books.

A RESTING PLACE —

with light refreshments, has been provided at S. Alban's Depôt. Members of the Congregation, who live at a distance from S. Alban's, have found it a great convenience. Further particulars can be obtained from Mrs. Kerr, at the Depôt.

THE OFFERINGS —

on S. Alban's Day amounted to £175 18s. 4¼d. Detailed information about the offertory in general will be given in succeeding numbers of the ***"Gospeller"***.

* *

Chris comments:

The most recent figure for the population of our Parish is 4,924, similar to that of the District in 1865, although the parish is somewhat larger than the original District.

St Alban's Mission, Leopold Street, was the previous St Alban's Church building opened in 1871, used mainly as a school during the week after the opening of the present Church of St Alban. It was later renamed St Columba's Mission and was demolished in 1915 and replaced with a purpose-built school building, which lasted until St Alban's School moved to a new building on Angelina Street in 1965, in turn demolished when Ark St Alban's Academy moved into its new building at the bottom of Conybere Street. Sale of the site on the corner of Leopold Street and Dymoke Street provided the endowment of the "Trustees of St Alban's School" — a parish charity "To promote for the public benefit the religious, educational and other charitable work of the Church of England in the ecclesiastical parish of St Alban the Martyr and St Patrick, Highgate" which makes annual grants to the Academy, the P.C.C. and other suitable causes in the parish.

The Holy Cross Mission was in an adapted cottage in Moseley Street. The house was demolished with others in the very early 1900s to make room for Rowton House.

Chris Smith

Peter and Alison Robinson — Golden Wedding Memories

Part one: The Early Years

We were very fortunate at St Alban's, to have been included in the Golden Wedding celebrations of Peter and Alison Robinson.

On talking to them, it was clear that their lives have been full of adventures and interest, so I approached them to see if they were willing to share some of these moments in an interview structured article for the magazine. Well, their enthusiasm and response was overwhelming and I am pleased to say that the variety and volume of experiences is such as to enable there to be two articles, the first is as follows.

How did you meet as Alison originates from Buckinghamshire and Peter from Redditch? … Sorry, I do not know which 'shire' Redditch is in.

PETER: We will each have to give our very different backstory, and many would say that there was no way that our marriage would work. In July 1935 I was born in a nursing home in Redditch, Worcestershire. *[Cynthia: there is my answer as to which 'shire' Redditch sits in!]*

My father was a polisher and plater at Terry Springs, the makers of Anglepoise Lamps, and my mother worked a needle press at Abel Morrell. At the time I had one half-sister, one half-brother, a full sister and our parents living at home, which was a rented terraced house with no mains electricity and lit by gas lamps!! My half-sister, aged 13, named me Peter; sadly she died 2 weeks later on our mother's birthday. My mother's first husband died from injuries incurred in the first World War and during World War 2 Redditch was bombed — I remember seeing at least one bomb coming down on the BSA factory — and at night we often had to go to the air raid shelters; every other house had an Anderson shelter in the garden. My father refused to come with the rest of us as he said that if he was going to die he was going to die in his bed! I used to enjoy this exciting experience partly because Mr Young next door would bring us hot chocolate!

I left school aged 15 in 1950 and worked in a fishing tackle factory where I was employed until about 1970, rising through the ranks to the position of Sales Manager. That was when the factory was taken over for road re-development by Redditch New Town Corporation.

Around the corner from home was St George's Church, **the** Anglo-Catholic church in Redditch, where I served as a boy and which was the focus of my life for many years. Redditch has been my home for most of my life, the exceptions being firstly, when I did National Service in the Army Catering Corps, serving on the 38th parallel where I was stationed on the border of South and North Korea. My responsibility was to manage the allocated meagre rations and to make them appetising for the army of men, including outposts — not easy in a Korean winter, when supplies are limited. Secondly there were five years that were spent in a cottage in a village in Worcestershire which I will refer to later on in this article.

My social life revolved around the AYPA — the Anglican Young People's Association. As well as serving, I was a member of the PCC, a Churchwarden and was also — of which more anon — an honorary member of the Women's Fellowship, which needed a man when physical help was needed putting up tables, etc. *[Cynthia: always useful to have a man around for such tasks as Alison soon found out — see below!]*

ALISON: When Peter was 13, I, Alison Ruth Onians, was born on Halloween, Sunday 31st October 1948, the 5th of what were to be 6 children, in a comfortable, detached house in the leafy Buckinghamshire country-side. For 30 years my father — who was born in 1899! — was Hildred Carlile Professor of Latin at Bedford College for Women in London University, and in 1937 married one of his students. To my father, I believe education was next in importance after his family and all his 6 children were educated in public schools. Both my parents were linguists in that my mother went to read French with Latin subsidiary at Bedford College in 1934 and my father certainly read *"The Three Musketeers"* in French when he was only 10 and spoke German when he went to study in Germany. He loved Latin and Greek, especially Latin in which he could make jokes or a speech at presentations at the University Senate House as required!

My mother used to take my younger sister and me to attend Matins at a *"Low church"* in a village a few miles away, which I loved because there was so much congregational singing. The family background was definitely Evangelical though. When my mother's grandfather was at Cambridge reading classics and theology, he was sought by the CMS (the Church Missionary Society as it

was then called) to go to Japan because of his skill with languages. In 1896 he became the first bishop of Hokkaido in Japan and it was said that he became more fluent in Japanese than in English. Anyway the Evangelical tradition was embedded in the family. My father didn't believe in infant baptism and so I chose to be baptised — along with my younger sister — in my school chapel at the age of 17 and we were both confirmed soon after by Graham Leonard, later Bishop of London. After school I went to what is now the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire to study piano, viola and General Musicianship, then read music at the University of Exeter and subsequently took a postgraduate diploma in librarianship in London. Whilst at Birmingham I was asked to sing in a number of choirs as I could sight-sing which a lot of *"proper singers"* could not do. I remember singing in a choir for the Actors Church Union service in the Cathedral, when (star-struck) I passed close by Richard Chamberlain, whom older readers will remember from *Dr Kildare* and *The Thorn Birds* on television.

In December 1974 I arrived at Redditch to take up my first professional post in the public library. I *"shopped around"* for a church to attend and very soon wrote off St George's as a possibility when I went near the church one Sunday and saw the priest come out in his biretta — definitely the wrong churchmanship for me! However, the library manager and secretary both attended St George's and encouraged me to try it out! The Series 2 Mass was completely unfamiliar as I had only known the Book of Common Prayer Communion service, but I soon got used to it, settled in and made friends.

In no time at all I joined the Women's Fellowship and in October 1975 attended their *"birthday dinner"* at a restaurant in Bidford-on-Avon which involved a coach trip. On the coach I discovered that after driving down to church I had only changed one shoe and so was wearing one flat driving shoe and one high heeled court shoe! As well as the parish priest Peter had been invited to the dinner as an honorary member, and he and I found ourselves sitting next to each other. He thought that I dealt very well with the shoe situation and we got talking. I had never been aware of Peter until then as he had always been serving at the east end of the church while I was in the congregation.

I told Peter that I was decorating my flat and he said that he did not live very far from me and volunteered to come and help me with the task. We got to know each other well and realised that he appreciated my strength and reliability and I his faith, integrity and sense of humour.

Peter went over to Cambridge and asked my father's permission to marry me; he and the rest of my family were very happy with the marriage. On 4th September 1976 we were married with a nuptial Mass at St George's by Fr Neil Kellett, who was assisted by two other priests. Two sons followed our marriage: Andrew in March 1978 and Stephen in June 1983.

PETER: In 1977 I was made unemployed for the 4th time in about seven years, this news coming on the same day that I was going to tell my employer that Alison was pregnant. As a result of the pregnancy we decided to swap rôles, so that Alison went back to work and I became a prototype house-husband, looking after the boys and the house and my mother, who lived with us until she died in 1985.

Cynthia: Who would have believed that you started a trend that became legislation — very ahead of the times.

I believe you used to live in a quirky village

… How did that come about?

PETER: In 1965 the organist at St George's wanted to move into the Worcestershire countryside and he bought four derelict cottages in Upton Snodsbury, wanting my mother to move in to be his housekeeper. Where mother went, I went too; she would not have gone without me! The move to Snodsbury was not straightforward because Worcestershire County Council had a preservation order on the cottages and Pershore Urban District Council had a demolition order on them. After tackling numerous problems with the authorities, we got the cottage restored, turning the four dwellings into one much larger one; I made various contributions to the finished residence.

Our time there was short-lived as the organist decided in 1971 that he wanted to move to Felixstowe and this time, we decided the move was too far. We had made legal provision at the beginning of the arrangement that if he ever wanted to move he would have the contents from the cottage and I would have the cottage itself. I sold the cottage and my mother and I moved back to Redditch in a mortgage-free home.

How did you hear about St Alban's and how long have you been coming?

PETER: We continued worshipping at St George's until October 1981 when we decided that we would never get on with the then parish priest. We tried out various local churches, but none suited us until I suggested we should go to St Alban's, which I had attended occasionally as a member of the GSS — the Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary. We went on the Sunday after Remembrance Sunday and were immediately welcomed and felt very much at home.

So we have been coming St Alban's since November 1981, a total of 45 years.

You have added Fr Neil Kellett to our prayer intentions and wondered how significant a person he has been in your lives?

ALISON: Fr Neil was already at St George's when I went there but he had already built up a friendship with Peter, involving, I believe, late night talks over a bottle of whisky. We have remained in regular phone contact with Fr Neil, who emigrated to Newfoundland with his family in 1977. A few years ago, he was diagnosed with cancer of the mouth from which he has now recovered but he remains in our prayers.

Fr Neil and Peter outside a friend's house on one of Fr Neil's rare return visits to the UK c.2010

Gosh, what a forward-thinking couple, breaking with convention and following their hearts, their ideals and their faith.

So, you have arrived at St Alban's, but we will stop at this moment in time and join them again next month for further recollections in their 50 years of memories.

Cynthia

The Colours of Autumn at St Alban's

Though the evenings are creeping in and the temperature is dropping gradually, Rachel has managed to bring warmth into church through the gorgeous flower arrangements she has created to mark our Harvest Festival.

Our Harvest offerings were plentiful and will go into the food bank stocks for distribution by Amanda

Rachel raided Margot's garden (with her permission might I add!) and collected these lovely Chinese lantern flowers that have been used so effectively to decorate the church.

Cynthia

Where Are We?

Catesby planned by candlelight
To make his mark down south;
From this great tower they watched the road,
Awaiting news in their abode.

But alas their plans did fail,
Their secrets all exposed by dawn;
They fled on horseback through the gloom,
To Holbeach House — and certain doom.

Alas their journey was in vain
Conspirators surrounded.
Whilst drying powder, wet with rain,
A stray spark set it all aflame.

The roof blew off and Catesby suffered
Severe burns to his body,
By then 200 troopers gathered,
Resistance would be folly

So, who prevailed amid the fight?
John Street, a local lad that night;
He raised his rifle and took aim
The cry went up — Catesby's slain

For his efforts he was rewarded,
Received a pension from the King,
A generous amount by all accounts,
Back then, was triple lock a thing?

Answer on page 19

The Church's Year — November 2026

The month begins with one of the great Church Festivals, All Saints' Day, Sunday November 1st, which was one of the great festival days in the Church's calendar for our ancestors — so may it be for us, especially since it falls on a Sunday this year. The day reminds us of all the saints of the Church, who shine out as lights in the darkness of this world, and this is a special comfort at precisely the time of the year when we are increasingly conscious of the long, dark evenings and the approach of even darker days ahead, before we come to Christmas. In the Apostles' Creed we say we believe in *"the communion 'which means fellowship' of saints"*, words which bear out very much the wonderful description at the beginning of Chapter 12 of the Epistle to the Hebrews of those who surround us as witnesses as we run the spiritual race on this earth, *"looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith"*. The saints support us, they uphold us, they encourage us — they know what it is like to endure the trials and the tribulations of this world. We can think especially of the patron saints of our own churches, St Bartholomew, St Barnabas, St Alban, St Agatha. We can follow their example in opening ourselves as much to the power of the Holy Spirit as they did.

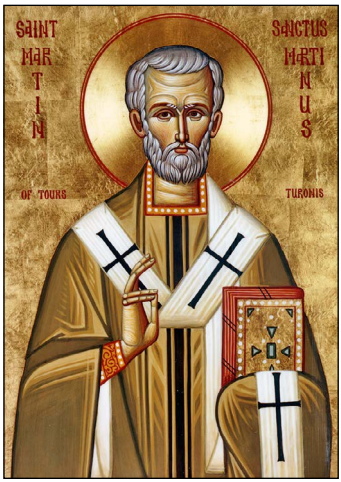
The next day, Monday November 2nd, is altogether a more sombre and meditative day, the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed, or All Souls' Day. On this day we remember especially those whom we have known and who were especially dear to us, obviously members of our family and others. At St Alban's we shall no doubt be holding our usual Evening Sung Mass at 7.30 pm on this day at which the names of people whom the congregation desire to be remembered will be read out — most churches today follow this laudable custom. The wonderful mediæval poem, the *Dies Irae, Dies Illa* — *"The Day of Wrath, that Day"* (don't be put off by the

opening line! It goes on to speak of the comfort which Christ will bring) is customarily sung by the choir. I remember giving a sermon on this very poem, with copies of the original Latin, which was sung by the choir, together with a translation, being provided to each member of the congregation so that each person could follow it.

The very next day, Tuesday November 3rd, is the Feast Day of Richard Hooker, the author of *"The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,"* one of the greatest of all works of theology defending the Church of England. A significant work on him was written by a former vicar of St Bartholomew's, Alison Joyce, so may members of St Bartholomew's think especially of Hooker on this day! I should also like to commend a recent very good book on the Church of England, *"Good Faith"* by Angela Tilby, which I have just finished reading. She explains well the importance of Hooker for an understanding of the Church of England. I warmly commend this book which I found very difficult to stop reading — whenever I had a spare moment, I would pick it up and continue reading. I think that may well be your experience also!

Painting in Balliol College, University of Oxford

On Friday November 6th we remember William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died on this day in 1944. He was one of the most impressive Archbishops of Canterbury in our history — I would include him among the greatest of our intellectual bishops, along with Anselm, Thomas Cranmer and also Rowan Williams. He had also a strong influence upon the *Beveridge Report* and the work leading up to the setting up of the welfare state under the Labour Government of 1945.



Wednesday November 11th is the Feast Day of St Martin, Bishop of Tours, who died in 397. He was one of the most popular of all saints in the Middle Ages and many churches are named after him his popularity was probably brought back by crusaders in the Middle Ages — including of course our famous St Martin in the Bull Ring. He was believed to have been a Roman soldier who became a Christian and was a much-loved bishop of Tours in France.

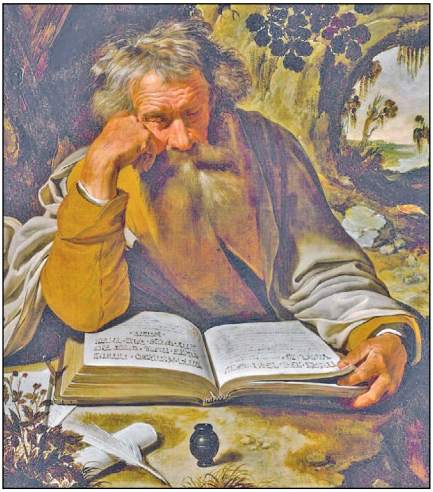
Sunday November 22nd is the last Sunday of the Church's Year, therefore The Sunday Next before Advent and is also the Feast of Christ the King. On this Sunday we celebrate all that the Christian year, beginning with Advent Sunday twelve months previously, has meant for us in the celebration of Christ's kingship over the whole of the world. It is also called sbecause of the magnificent Collect — one of my favourites! — which is said on this day

— Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

I find it necessary to say that Collect frequently throughout the year, as a means of stirring up my sluggish self to great devotion to our Lord and to great efforts on his behalf! May it equally avail for you!!

The following Sunday, November 29th, therefore. Is the First Sunday of Advent, which I think is my most favourite season of the year, with its note of longing and yearning for the coming of Christ, something which we can experience so long as we are prepared to regard it as a season in its own right and not just as a *"run up"* to Christmas. The beautiful Advent hymns — equalling the beauty of Christmas hymns — such as *"O come, O come, Emmanuel"* and others, bring out this theme very well. Many churches have Advent Carol services — a comparatively recent innovation and a good sign of the relative vigour of the Christian Church at this time, whatever its other difficulties.

The following day, Monday November 30th, is the Feast of St Andrew the Apostle and brother of Simon Peter. Andrew may seem a slightly less significant figure, rather in the shadow of his great brother, who is regarded as the leader of the apostles, but he was one of the four whom Jesus regarded as especially close to him — Andrew and Peter, together with James and John, two sets of two brothers therefore. We can think especially of the nation of Scotland with its romantic history, whose patron Saint Andrew is. It is rumoured that he went there on a missionary journey sometime after the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. May the spirit of love and obedience shown by Andrew to Jesus accompany us as we venture through this holy season of Advent.



Fr Andrew

Calendar for November 2026

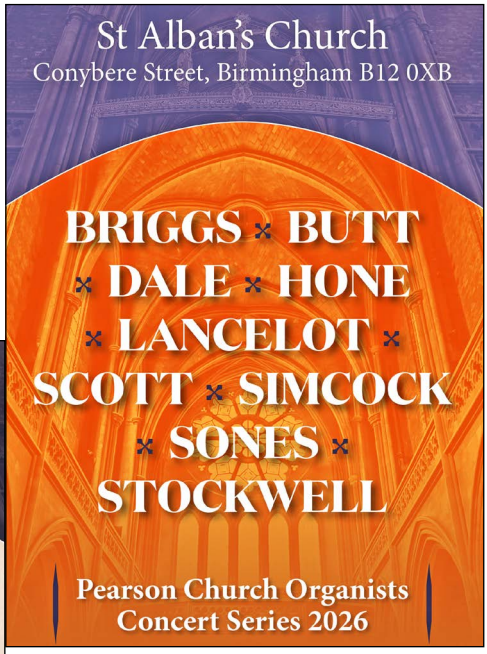
1st	**Sunday**	**All Saints**
2nd	**Monday**	**All Souls,** ***Commemoration of the Faithful Departed***
3rd	Tuesday	**Richard Hooker** ***(St Martin de Porres, R; St Winefride, V)***
4th	Wednesday	Weekday in OT
5th	Thursday	Weekday in OT
6th	Friday	Archbishop William Temple
7th	Saturday	Weekday in OT
8th	**Sunday**	**Remembrance Sunday** (**OT 32**)
9th	Monday	Weekday in OT
10th	Tuesday	Weekday in OT
11th	Wednesday	**St Martin of Tours**
12th	Thursday	Weekday in OT
13th	Friday	Weekday in OT
14th	Saturday	Weekday in OT
15th	**Sunday**	**2nd Sunday before Advent** (**OT 33**)
16th	Monday	St Margaret of Scotland S
17th	Tuesday	Weekday in OT
18th	Wednesday	St Elizabeth of Hungary S
19th	Thursday	St Hilda of Whitby, R
20th	Friday	St Edmund, Mr
21st	Saturday	Weekday in OT
22nd	**Sunday**	**Christ the Universal King** (**OT 34**) *(Last before Advent)*
23rd	Monday	St Clement of Rome, Mr
24th	Tuesday	S Andrew Dung-lac, Pr and Companions Mrr)
25th	Wednesday	Weekday in OT
26th	Thursday	Weekday in OT
27th	Friday	Weekday in OT
28th	Saturday	Weekday in OT
29th	**Sunday**	**First Sunday of Advent** *First Sunday of Year C*
30th	**Monday**	**St Andrew, Apostle**

And it's a Wrap!!

A Resounding Success of the St Alban's 2026 Organ Concert Series, Organised by Angela Sones, who writes…

… 2026 has seen an excellent line-up of some of the finest organists and musicians in the country, including many who are internationally acclaimed.

David Briggs, Andrew Scott and Keith Dale all appeared in the 2025 series (Keith as accompanist for my September weekend). They enjoyed the St Alban's experience so much that they asked to return in 2026.



All of the recitalists have had wonderful things to say about St Alban's. For some, it has been a trip down memory lane, reliving their own personal experiences of their time here in post as organ scholar, organist or Director of Music. They found that little had changed; much remaining exactly as they remember it — including the theatre of the Anglo Catholic services, accompanied by a generous amount of incense!

It must be said that each recitalist has brought a different flavour to each of the concerts and all of the nine programmes this year have presented different styles and colours to the series. We have also been very privileged that our guests have stayed to play for the Mass and Solemn Choral Evensong and Benediction on the Sunday following. Each of the recitalists was invited to choose the music for these services, and this has

introduced new choral works to our repertoire. The choir have enjoyed learning and performing a variety of music, and this has resulted in attracting new singers to the choir; especially for Evensong, where we consistently see full back rows of tenors and basses. It truly is a privilege to be able to sing the cathedral repertoire to an excellent standard.

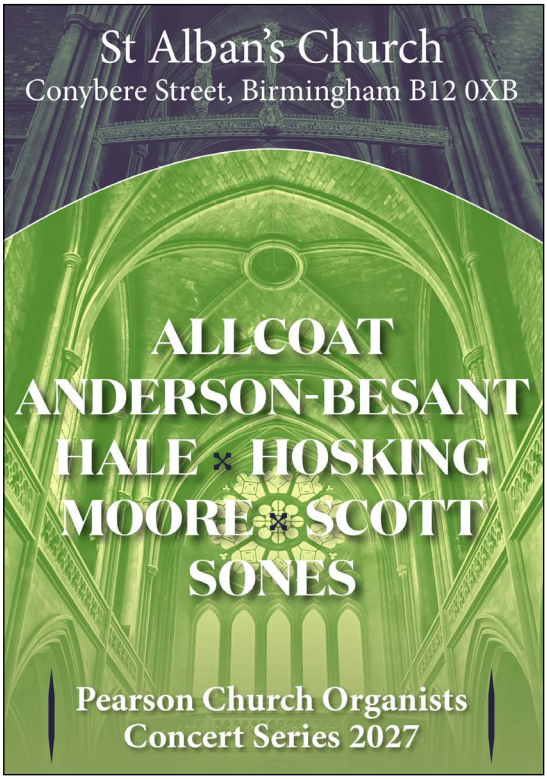
A new and exciting addition to this year's series was the David Briggs' Choral Workshop that saw a choir of 38 gather in the quire — extra chairs were needed for the occasion. So great was the interest that the choir was comprised of singers, organists and choir directors from across Birmingham, the Midlands and as far away as Cheshire. The roof was surely raised in the rendition of *'I was glad'* by C.H. Parry!

There was no rest for David, as in the evening he treated us to a marvellous organ concert, which attracted a goodly audience.

Every recital has attracted new supporters to the series. For some, it has been their first visit to St Alban's, and many of them have commented on the warm welcome they received. Others have returned after spending several decades away. People are travelling considerable distances to hear outstanding recitalists play on our fine organ in this beautiful church. To allow this to continue, we need to look after our instrument, hence the launch of the **Organ Restoration Appeal**.

The fellowship continues after Choral Evensong, with drinks at a local pub followed by the (now) customary curry. It is a welcome opportunity for clergy, singers and organists to relax and enjoy one another's company.

On a personal note, it has been really lovely to welcome so many friends and colleagues



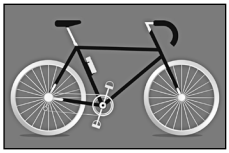
into our church, all of whom have enjoyed their experience. A fabulous end to a wonderful series of concerts.

Next year we have another super line-up of Pearson Organists, and the opening concert of 2027 will be on Saturday 24th April 2027 at 1.00 pm, given by Christopher Moore, former Pearson organist at St Michael and All Angels, Croydon.

Concerts will run April — October 2027 on the Saturday before the fourth Sunday of each month, with the recitalists playing at Mass and Choral Evensong and Benediction on the Sunday.

Do come and join us; save the dates, and I hope to see you there!!!

Organist and Director of Music,
Angela Sones



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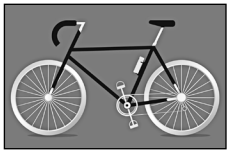

The lads are back from their marathon cycle ride to Marseille.
Hopefully Sam will give us an update for next month's magazine but in the meantime, well done and here's hoping your aching limbs recover soon.
And by the way, what is your next project??

Cynthia

Answer to ***Where Are We?*** *(p 12)*

At **Coughton Court** they watched the road
And waited for their fate
But Fawkes was found, the fuse unlit,
The plot undone by dawn;
Through smoke and flight, their cause was lost —
Yet still the tale lives on.

Cynthia

Music in St Alban's for November 2026

Sunday 1st — All Saints' Day — 10.00 a.m.

Mass setting: Ireland in C
Hymns: 197 For all the Saints
231 Who are these, like stars appearing
225 Give me the wings of faith to rise (Tii San Rocco)
484 The church's one foundation (T Aurelia 167)
Anthem: O Thou the Central Orb — Charles Wood
Voluntary: Thema met Variaties — Hendrik Andriessen

Monday 2nd — All Souls' Day — 7.30 p.m.

Mass setting: Darke in F
Hymns: 381 Jerusalem the golden
329 Jesu, Son of Mary
412 My Soul there is a country
Anthem: In Paradisum — Gabriel Fauré *(Requiem)*
Absolution of the Dead: Libera Me — Gabriel Fauré *(Requiem)*
Voluntary: Psalm Prelude No.3 (Psalm 23) — Herbert Howells
Organist: Elli-Mae McGlone

Sunday 8th — Remembrance Sunday — 10.00 a.m.

Mass setting: Missa de Angelis
Hymns: 273 And now, O Father, mindful of the love
498 Son of God, eternal Saviour
378 Immortal love, for ever full
372 He who would valiant be
489 National Anthem vv 1 & 2
Anthem: Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts — Henry Purcell
Voluntary: Fugue in E♭ Major (St Anne) BWV 552 — J.S. Bach

Sunday 15th — Second Sunday before Advent (OT 33) — 10.00 a.m.

Mass setting: Anglican Folk Mass — Martin Shaw
Hymns: 449 Soldiers of Christ, arise
405 Lord of the boundless curves of space (T 365)
70 Lord Jesus, think on me
377 Immortal, invisible, God only wise
Anthem: O taste and see — Ralph Vaughan Williams
Voluntary: Prelude in C Major BWV 545 — J.S. Bach

Sunday 22nd — Christ the Universal King (OT 34) — 10.00 a.m.

Mass setting:	White in E♭
Hymns:	338 At the name of Jesus
	332 All hail the power of Jesu's name
	282 Faithful Shepherd, feed me
(	(sheet) Christ Triumphant, ever reigning (T Guiting Power)
Anthem:	Lift up your heads — Samuel Coleridge Taylor
Voluntary:	March on a theme of Handel — Alexandre Guilmant

Sunday 22nd — Solemn Choral Evensong & Benediction 6.00 p.m.

Responses:	Smith
Psalms:	93, 97 (Sumsion)
Canticles:	Blair in B minor
Hymns:	334 All people that on earth do dwell
	433 O worship the King
Anthem;	Let all the world — Ralph Vaughan Williams
Voluntary:	Præludium in G — Nicolaus Bruhns
Organist:	*George Moloney*

Marian Anthem — Angelus — changes to Salve Regina on Advent Sunday

Choir rehearsals:

Monday November 2nd, 6.30 p.m.;
Thursdays, 7.15 p.m.; Sundays 9.00 a.m;
Solemn Choral Evensong & Benediction 4.30 p.m.

Director of Music — Angela Sones,
Music Secretary — Bryce Somerville

A Message from the Printing Unit

Just a reminder that the **December 2026** issue will be a joint publication with **January 2027**, as Alban and I will be away over the Christmas/New Year period. It has not yet been decided whether the magazine will continue to be bi-monthly, which will cut down on postage costs for the printed version — now in colour.

The email PDF will continue to be available to all who would like to receive it, free of charge, although a donation would be appreciated. Please contact Chris Smith (details on the inside front cover) if you would like to receive the PDF

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Birmingham Parish Choirs Choral Evensong

On Saturday 17th October 2026, parish church choirs from around the city were invited to meet at St Chad's Cathedral for the annual RSCM awards ceremony which formed part of the afternoon rehearsal and evensong service.

A time to experience singing as one large choir, tackling new music as well as some old favourites and renewing acquaintances with members of other choirs who sing at St Mary's, Selly Oak, St Peter's. Harborne, St Mary's, Moseley and St Peter's, Maney Hill to name but a few. Often members of these choirs come and sing at St Alban's on feast days and at our monthly Solemn Choral Evensong and Benediction services.

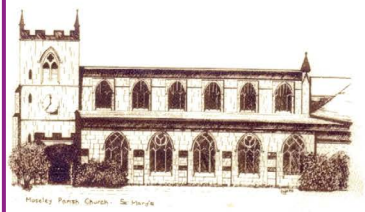
It was good to have Paul Carr accompanying on the organ and to be under the direction of Ashley Wagner who had to step in at short notice to replace David Saint.

The priest at the service was the newly appointed dean, Fr Craig Szmidt who can be seen in the centre of the aisle in the picture below. It is hoped that this image along with one of the award winners, will appear in the next edition of the RSCM magazine Church Music Quarterly.

The whole event was planned by Mick Perrier and Simon Palmer who, buoyed by the support and feedback from this service, will be collaborating to organise events in 2027, and something similar at SATM, so watch this space.

The music included:

Give Us Wings of Faith — Ernest Bullock
Preces and responses: Joanna Forbes-L'Estrange
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis —Basil Hardwood
Blessed Be The God and Father — Samuel Sebastian Wesley



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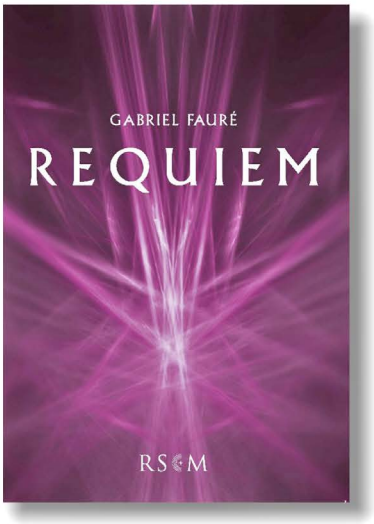
REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY:
November 8th 2026



Gabriel Fauré:

REQUIEM

An Afternoon Workshop for Singers
3.00pm-5.00pm

Leading to a Service of Music and Readings for Remembrance Sunday at 6.30pm

Directed by Michael Perrier
Organist: Angela Sones

Singers: £5.00 (includes scores / all refreshments)
(Students u-24 free)
Contact music@moseleychurch.org.uk to reserve a place