4. What small act of mercy, forgiveness or peacemaking could you practise this week?

A prayer

Jesus, we thank you for those who have shown us your love. Hold close all who mourn, and give us grace to bring you all that we carry. Keep our eyes fixed on you, and shape our lives through small acts of mercy, kindness and peace. Amen.

Supporting our church

Thank you for any gift you are able to give to support the life and work of our church. You can donate using the QR code below.

Our preferred way to give is through the Parish Giving Scheme, for a single donation or regular giving. Regular gifts help us plan and sustain our worship, care and service in the community.

parishgiving.org.uk
Parish code: 430643009

All Saints Sunday

United Parish of Rural Ainsty | 1 November 2026

Practicing the Way • Becoming more like Jesus

Today we give thanks for those whose lives have shown us God's love, and remember those we love but see no longer. We look to Jesus, who walks with us and teaches us his way.

Hebrews 12 verses 1 to 3

New International Version

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Matthew 5 verses 1 to 12

New International Version

1 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
5 Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
7 Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Scripture quotations taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Becoming more like Jesus

Based on Tony Holmes’s sermon. This reflection touches on bereavement and the death of a child. Please take whatever space you need.

On All Saints’ Day we remember the great cloud of witnesses: people whose faith encourages us to keep going. Some are familiar names from Scripture; others are people we have known and loved. Their lives help us to recognise what following Jesus can look like.

Tony shares the story of his daughter Connie, whose kindness, gratitude and concern for others continued through her illness. Her greatest concern near the end of her life was for those she loved. Looking back, Tony sees how her faith was forming her into the likeness of Jesus. Her witness continues to shape the lives of those who knew her.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus helps us recognise the life of his kingdom. He calls the meek, the merciful and the peacemakers blessed. These are qualities we see in Jesus himself, and qualities he invites us to practise in our everyday relationships. We grow into his likeness as we learn to forgive, seek peace and respond with compassion.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” Tony speaks honestly about grief and the continuing pain of losing Connie. For him, faith has brought a growing trust that God is present within that pain. We may each experience grief and God’s presence differently; there is room to bring our questions, silence and sorrow to him.

Hebrews invites us to run with perseverance, keeping our eyes on Jesus. Becoming like him is the work of a lifetime. This week, we can begin where we are, trusting his grace and taking one small step along his way.

Questions for reflection

1. Who has helped you see something of Jesus through the way they have lived? What do you give thanks for in their example?

2. Which of the Beatitudes speaks most closely to your life today? What invitation or comfort might it hold?

3. What would help you bring your weariness, grief or questions honestly before God?