



**St Mark's Church, Reigate**

November 2023

### **Letter from the Vicar, Father Martin Colton**

Dear Friends,

"At the going down of the sun..."

On the news this week I heard a woman say, "the time I fear the most is the going down of the sun. That is when the bombing starts." As we leave daylight saving time, the darkness compresses our days as we turn the clocks back.

This is the liturgical time or season in the church calendar set apart for Remembering. We begin November with All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day – or the day of the dead, as it is elsewhere known. Rev Tom Gordon reassures those who are grieving that "what we are struggling with is normal." In his books *Whispers of Wisdom* and *New Journeys Now Begin* we read that it is part of the New Journey precipitated by loss. This season of remembrance, this month, is for those who live on, in their new journeys. A season to acknowledge and name the countless losses that are part of life's transitions. A way marker on the road of life that acknowledges that we have passed this way.

This season on Sunday 12 November, we remember those who have served the cause of freedom and given the ultimate sacrifice. We will stand at the Reigate War Memorial and remember the local people of Reigate who are brought back into living memory, to receive our prayers of thanksgiving as we lay our tribute, in a communal act of lament.

As Guy Fawkes events coincide with the Sunday Services for All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day on Sunday 5 November, we pray for all who continue to be affected by sectarian divisions. War and rumours of war are not far from our TV and front-page headlines. For many living in imminent danger, remembering is a way of life.

This is true for parents who tie home-made friendship bracelets to the wrists of children in Gaza – preparing for the going down of the sun, not knowing what may happen next. Death, anger, tensions, grieving, and war all threaten to dismember what God has created. As Genesis opens, we read "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Genesis 1.3). That light which came in the darkness of night to reconcile, to heal and to restore, was Jesus Christ. A sign that God had kept his promise and remembered his broken people.

In this season of Remembrance let the living remember: "From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised." (Psalm 113.3)

Every blessing