

Sermon for All Saints – for all ages.

Look around our church

We see a group of friends

Did you know there are more people in our group than you can see?

I wonder who else might be in our group of friends?

Well.... Let's walk around our church to find out....

Reredos – last supper – Jesus is in our group and he is at the centre of our friends. He is here in this wooden picture.

Do you know who else is in Jesus' group?

Can you see his closest friends... the disciples.

See how they sit around the table and we are part of their group – it's the same with us – *walk around the altar* – we sit around this table with our group of friends – and all of these friends are in our group...

Jesus had lots of really close friends – the women who stayed near when he died... does anyone know where you can see Jesus' mummy in this church – *move to the Lady Chapel so everyone knows where to look*

Who else in our group of friends in church? Who else is with us around our table?

And we have Saint Swithun – who is our special saint – who can spot St Swithun in this church. St Swithun was a bishop who cared for people and amazing miracles are said to have happened because of his work

There are lots of our friends represented here ... *move to the reredos*

Here is Hilda – a nun who became abbess of Whitby and who was known to be peaceful, charitable and full of justice

Here is Saint Paul – who had a radical conversion and made Jesus known to so many through his mission and his writings

And lots of special friends represented in this wooden picture.

And there are lots of other people in our group of friends – Vanda who has had an operation and can't be here in person but who prays with us at home, Lorna, Edith, Claire, Alan, Neil, Elaine, Gwen, Ivy and so many more...

And ... you tell me who?

And look there are so many – people who would sit here or here or here – and we can remember all of our group here – I've written lots of people's names – but there are so many more...

And there is another group of people who are in our group – it is all of those who have died – people like Barbara and Colvyn. Today we are especially remembering Peter, who died nearly a year ago

and who is part of our group of friends. We remember this group particularly tomorrow on All Souls Day.

We also have the people who died in war who we remember next week at Remembrance in our group of friends. In our bible reading today we remember that whatever our lives are like now – God blesses us.

And in our group of friends are all the other churches with their groups – can you think of any places near to us – maybe The church of the Good Shepherd – Bridget is in our group of friends and all of the people who are in that church. Also the Baptist church and the Roman Catholic church and all the churches around us – not just our neighbours here but in London, in this country, in Europe, in the whole world – and when you stop to think about it is soooo big because we are in a group that stretches all over the world and all over time – now, back and forwards and it is amazing – it is a family of love and we are in it...

And do you know that today is our special celebration – a golden feast day – to remember that we are part of this amazing group of friends. We call this group of friends the communion of saints. These are the group of friends who gather around the table where love is shared (*walk around the altar*) and there is space for everyone, we can all gather in love together.

Amen