**From the rectory:**

**Hello.**

**As I sit in my study watching the leaves gently start to fall, I am reminded that no matter what, the seasons change without so much as a government ruling, or a royal decree.**

**Mother nature is beginning to take her rest, to prepare for the cooler days of the winter and start the slow process of preparation for a new spring.**

**In our churches, we are also thinking about taking some time to reflect on a long time without a priest, and a long pandemic.**

**Our buildings also need preparing for the winter. Drains and gullies will need clearing, heating systems will need checking, and our churches need some TLC, before the festivals of the winter begin. It won’t be long before we start preparing to celebrate the harvest, following this we enter the season of remembrance, and this is hot on the heels of Advent and Christmas.**

**There has never been a time when your village church has needed you more. Our benefice of All Saints, Sutton Bassett, St Mary’s Weston – by – Welland, St Mary’s Ashley, St Botolph’s Stoke Albany, All Saints Wilbarston, St Peter’s East Carlton and St Mary Magdalene Cottingham, are beautiful medieval jewels in our village crowns.**

**This is not necessarily about money; in fact, I think I would say we are more ‘time’ challenged than perhaps we are financially challenged. Our churches stand at the heart of our communities and each of them need their village to care for them. Not only does it take a community to raise a child, but it also takes a community, pulling together, in all sorts of different ways, to keep the church**

**Across the UK people are moving out of the towns and cities to take advantage of the beautiful countryside, the walking and cycling, the good schools, the clean air, and the community aspect of village life. So now I ask that we all think about how we can connect or re-connect with our church or other community projects, to guarantee their existence for future generations.**

**I will be lovely to get to know you all. Whether you are a regular church goer, have never set foot inside the building, or just a little curious to know why these fantastic buildings were built so many years ago. Do please come and find us.**

**You will find me at our services, email me or pop into the rectory in Stoke Albany. I will endeavour to work hard for God and the church as we look to recover and then regrow following a tough ‘winter’ time. As the Harvest hymn says,**

 **‘All good things around us,**

**are sent from heaven above,**

**so, thank the Lord, oh thank the Lord for all his love.’**

**With my prayers for you all,**

**Rev Amanda**

**Rev.ajoliver@gmail.com**