Dear friend
Many thanks to Martin for preparing this week's service sheet, and for selecting the following music, which includes some of my favourites!

Sing along to the great hymn, *For All the Saints*, with Vaughan Williams' brilliant tune (SINE NOMINE) sung by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OaBgaMcOvM

'In Christ Alone' (Mass Choir Version).
Sing along to *Songs of Praise* from the Royal Albert Hall:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gax8GL7EViE

Morten Lauridsen – 'O Nata Lux' (Sheet music video).
Jörg Halubek, conducts the Chamber Choir of Europe in this beautiful piece written in 1997 by the American composer:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rp_aEG3H-1k

Gustav Holst: 'Nunc Dimittis' - Voces8 (live).
This beautiful setting by Holst, sung live by Voces 8 in 2010, in Cathédrale Vaison-la-Romaine:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE159jxkWWM

'Agnus Dei' with Michael W Smith & the First Dallas Choir & Orchestra (live with lyrics).
Don't be put off by the introduction, this is a lovely chant for worship helping to encounter the Holy Spirit, clearly evident in this clip:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=db0t_NUq5bw

With all good wishes
Chris

Sunday 31st October 2021 –All Saints' Day

We praise and thank you, Holy Spirit of God, for the men and women you have called to be saints; from your first fallible, frightened friends who followed you to Jerusalem, through the centuries of discovery and growth; people of every class and temperament, down to the present day.
A New Zealand Prayer Book

CONFESSION: Lord, you know well that I love you; have pity on me, for I am nothing but a sinner. *St Thérèse of Lisieux*
May God who loved the world so much that he sent his Son to be our Saviour, forgive us our sins and make us holy to serve him in the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Common Worship

COLLECT: Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

READINGS: Wisdom 3: 1 - 9. Psalm 24 1 - 6. Revelation 21: 1 - 6a. John 11: 32 to 44

REFLECTION: In the church calendar, All Saints Day, is followed by All Souls Day, which is the commemoration of the faithful departed. We are reminded in the readings today, of the very fragile nature of life and, in cosmic terms, how brief our own life span is. We read of Lazarus being raised from the dead through a miracle by Jesus and, in the reading from Revelations, we have that marvellous vision of a new Jerusalem. What a brilliant depiction of arriving in heaven! In the same passage we are reminded that death is the greatest of all painkillers, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

Memento mori was a saying of the ancient stoics who often reminded themselves that everyone has to die and that we should live our lives accordingly. This doesn't mean being selfish or hedonistic, but rather through generosity, love, and humility. Psalm 24 gives us some guidance on this:
[Good people are] *Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.*

This is the time to remember all the saints who led their lives selflessly in order that others would discover the good news of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, it is an appropriate time for us to be thinking of the great departed who had an influence on our own lives, be it our parents, or a significant other person who shaped, guided or moulded us. In conclusion it's a good time to think about what we want to achieve in the future and how those who went before us have influenced the lives that we lead.

PRAYERS*:* Gracious and holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate on you and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
St Benedict of Nursia (480-547)

We pray for the church, and for all who strive to follow Jesus' example.
We pray for the world; for all people who are suffering, through war, hunger, poverty or natural disaster, giving thanks for agencies and individuals who give of themselves to others.
We pray for those who are sick, or suffering loneliness, anxiety, or fear of what the future holds. We give thanks for the dedication of medical staff and other key workers. We bring before you now all those whose special needs are in our minds at this time…

PRAYER: We remember and praise you for the saints and martyrs of this and every age, whose lives, like seeds, dropped to the ground, yet whose witness has inspired us and borne fruit.
(John Bell, the Iona community)

We say **THE LORD'S PRAYER**
We share **THE GRACE**

PRAYER: God, the source of all holiness and giver of all good things: may we who have shared this life as strangers and pilgrims here on earth be welcomed with all your saints to the heavenly feast on the day of your kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen