

What's in a name?

We all recognise the power of a name. It says who we are. It can come to define us to those who hear it, saying something of our character, our being, our hopes or achievements. You don't need to look too far back in history to recognise the power a name has. Positively or negatively, I am sure our minds can quickly jump to important historical figures who 'made a name for themselves.'

Names often also have meanings innately within them. The name Jesus means 'to deliver or rescue', the name Jabez is 'to make sorrowful.' Your own name very likely has its own meaning to it.

A character's name in a book can immediately transform you to the place they adventure in, perhaps Bilbo Baggins whisks you to MiddleEarth or Mr. Darcy transports you to the world of Georgian England.

Company names may give you a sense of joy, or perhaps the beginnings of internal rage depending on your customer experience and likewise an image or logo may, as the phrase goes, 'speak a thousand words'. We instantly recognise a particular brand or product just from a small (or large) icon or image.

But, what about when your name doesn't say anything about you? Where it is nondescript, forgettable? What about when your logo doesn't stand out or really define who you are or what you want to become?

This is the position we, as a parish, have found ourselves in. We have been living in the legacy of change, with a name that yes, technically, says who we are but that really says little about us. Likewise, we have a logo steeped in the past, of four becoming one, but speaking little to what we want to be both now and become in the future. Few people outside of our church recognise our name, that we are one church, and fewer still would know our logo from a line-up. Even the PCC asked the question, what does 'parish' mean to anyone?

And so, as a PCC we looked at how we can redefine our present and our future with both our name and our image. After working with TMC, a locally based design company, we unanimously agreed on the logo adorning the cover of the magazine, and seen again below, and on the new operating name of All Saints Congleton. We believe these two facets together speak to who and what we want to be as church together and will help us to both have a shared identity within but also be recognisable without. Below we explore more of how the name and logo will define who we are and why we picked this....

All Saints

The name 'All Saints' is one of the most recognisable across the country and within the Church of England. It is something people associate more readily with 'church'. For our parish there is a poignant unifying factor in the name; All Saints brings *all* together, bringing history and future together, working with those *who are already a part* of us as we seek to reach out to those *who will become a part* of the family. All Saints complements the new logo to provide an emphasis on our oneness in Christ and will allow us to move forward with a new identity that can help us to work more effectively together.

We will be retaining the historic church names as these names provide a link with history so that people enquiring about baptism, burial or wedding records know they have the right place. However, whilst for many the identity and history of each individual church is important, we need to recognise that we are now a campus ministry, one church operating across multiple locations. This means we will see All Saints - St Peter's or All Saints - St Stephen's. Being able to move from just historic church names to something more modern and under the banner of All Saints as the unifying factor will enable us to more comprehensively understand the benefit of location for events and activities.

The Logo

The use of a logo based on the traditional symbol for the trinity helps to visually represent our missional aims and outcomes as a parish. On one hand it conveys the double tryptic of our Mission Statement: to love God, each other and our community, as we grow in faith, relationship and service. It also speaks of a "coming together" as one strong worshipping community, bound and found in the oneness of God. It visually represents the care and consideration that we want people to find in their welcome, both as they come into our buildings, but also as we reach out to them, a visual comforting hug if you will - that they will feel welcomed and included, that they will feel emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually supported. The three 'bodies' can also be seen to represent the reaching out of God down to us (top), of us across to others (left) and of those others we connect with reaching up to God (right), helping us see our own mission and the commission through our symbol.

Thinking about the colours, we can find some useful meaning in the colours chosen: The colour blue is traditionally seen as a colour of

calm and peace, has links with spirituality and protection, and biblically represents heaven, spiritual healing and the waters of baptism. As a church we aim to be a place where people feel valued and welcome, and where they are spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically supported. We are also a place of connection with families through baptism.

The raspberry red has traditional meanings of passion and love, as well as biblically representing the red clay (oudem) from which Adam (all of humanity in the creation narrative) was made, the blood which Jesus shed in sacrifice for our mistakes, and the coming of the Holy Spirit for all believers at Pentecost. Visually this is helping represent our missional aims to be people who love God, love each other and love our community, who grow in service and sacrifice and who are part of a passionate, strong worshipping community.

So, what's in a name? What does an image bring to mind? Actually, quite a lot and we want our name and our image to be memorable, to have meaning and to be something to be proud of identifying with. As we move forward in our mission, we want to be brave and bold. We want to embrace a new vision and a new identity which builds on all that has gone before but also enables us to present ourselves in a new way to each new generation. A place of hope, of passion, welcome and worship. We hope that you will join us on this journey of being one, together, wherever we are, as All Saints Congleton.

Nic Blackmore with Chris Downes-Ward and Revd Ian Enticott on behalf of the PCC



All Saints Congleton

Making Jesus known – living his way