



**ALL SAINTS CHURCH,
MICKLEOVER**

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A warm welcome to All Saints

Sunday 5th May 2024

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES THIS SUNDAY

- Holy Communion at All Saints, 10am. Peter Walley will be speaking.
- Morning Praise at St Johns, 10am. Paul Pritchard will be speaking.
- *Baptism of Rafferty at All Saints. Welcome to Rafferty and his family.*

LIVE LINK- You will join a live video of the service at St Johns from 10am on YouTube.
<https://youtube.com/live/89VKfv4n9nE>

MIDWEEK SERVICES

- Tuesday: Online Prayers, 8am. Meeting on Zoom, usual login
- Wednesdays: Holy Communion, 9.30am
- **Thursday 9th May – Ascension Day, Holy Communion at All Saints at 7.30pm**

Collect

Risen Christ, by the lakeside you renewed
your call to your disciples:
help your Church to obey your command
and draw the nations to the fire of your
love, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen**

Hymns

Sing to God New Songs of Worship
A New Commandment
Here is Love Vast as the Ocean
Here is Bread, Here is Wine
Name of all Majesty

Sunday's Readings

Acts 10: 44 to end, John 15: 9 to 17

Next Sunday's Readings

Acts 1: 15-17, 21-end, John 17: 6-19

ALL SAINTS CAFÉ WARM SPACE- Join us for friendly chat, coffee, tea, cake and biscuits every Wednesday in the Centre 10am-12noon. Everyone welcome!

ST JOHN'S REST STOP CAFÉ WARM SPACE - Friday mornings 10am-12pm in the Link. Do join us for Tea/Coffee, friendly conversation, and delicious home-made cakes.

APCM- This year's APCM will be held on Sunday 12th May following the 10am service. Papers are available at the back of Church today. If you need to ask a question under 'any other business,' please can you let Peter know as soon as possible and prior to the meeting so we can give a thought out response. Many thanks.

'Christ's Disciples in 2024' - John 15:9-17

I recently discovered that the word 'disciple' occurs in the New Testament, 269 times yet the word 'Christian' is found only three times? How interesting! During our Lords' time here on earth, He saw so much suffering, inequality, and heartache that he could so easily have toured the world healing and sorting out folk's problems. He sometimes did, but most of His ministry was to teach His friends and followers to be His disciples, understanding '**His Way**'. Then, just before He physically left the earth He gave His great commission to His followers: "**go and make disciples**" Matthew 28.19

For me it is clear His priority was, and is, for us to become His disciples and then for us to go and make disciples. I've heard it said that becoming a disciple "isn't a quick fix, but the work of a lifetime".

So, I have been thinking about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in 2024.

I believe today's Scriptures gives us the answer! So, what does it say?

John records Jesus saying to His disciples: "**Love each other in the same way I have loved you**". This was not a suggestion, not a recommendation, but a command. It's a directive from the One who 'is Love'. The love Jesus speaks of is not the fleeting, fickle emotional love of the world, but a love that is enduring, prepared to sacrifice, and can change the hardest of attitudes and hearts. It's a love that reflects the very heart of God.

It's not superficial either, its deep, Jesus loved us enough to leave the glory of heaven, to take on the limitations of human flesh, to live among us, to share in our joys and sorrows, and ultimately, to lay down His life for us. This is the measure of love that Jesus commands us to have for one another. It's a love that is willing to sacrifice, to give of oneself for the good of others. This is the love that should characterise our relationships as Disciples of Christ.

It's also broad. Jesus doesn't specify who we are to love. He doesn't say, "Love your family as I have loved you," or "Love your friends as I have loved you." He simply says, "**Love each other**". This means that our love should extend to all those around us, regardless of who they are. It means our neighbours, our colleagues, our classmates, the stranger on the street, the person who looks different, thinks differently, or lives differently. This is the breadth of love that Jesus commands us to have.

There are many today who have such low 'self-esteem', yet Jesus values us all, in spite of all we have messed up. His love elevates us, gives us dignity and worth. In the same way, our love for others should lift them up, affirm their worth, encourage them and inspire them to reach their God-given potential. This is the height of love that Jesus commands us to have.

His love can transform lives. It has the power to heal, to restore, to reconcile, to bring hope where there is despair, and light where there is darkness. Our love, when it is directed by Christ's Spirit, can have the same transformative effect. It can bring healing to broken relationships, reconciliation to divided communities, hope to those who are

hurting, and light to those who are lost. This is the power of love that Jesus commands us to have. How amazing, what a privilege, what a responsibility.

In all these ways, Jesus' command to love challenges us, stretches us. This standard seems impossible to us. It requires humility, sacrifice, and a heart that is attuned to the heart of God. It is only possible when we allow the Holy Spirit to have freedom in our lives. This is love that should set us apart as disciples or followers of Christ. It is this love that bears witness to the world of the transforming power Christ.

Finally, I can't stop without referring to the amazing invitation Christ offers all of us. He wants to be our friend! This is not a casual invitation, but a call into a relationship that's beyond human understanding. It's an invitation to know and be known by the Creator of the Universe, the Savior of the world.

Again, in our Gospel Jesus says, **"You are my friends if you do what I command."** This statement is both a promise and a challenge. It's a promise of a relationship with Christ that is intimate, personal, and life changing. It's a challenge for us to be willing to follow His example, to love as He loved, and to serve as He served.

He said, **"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you"**. It's a love that was prepared to lay down His life for us, sinners. This love is the foundation of our friendship with Christ.

It's based on obedience. Jesus says, **"If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love."** Then He says, **"I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."** He is saying here that He wants to show us how He and His Father think. It's revealed by what He taught those who were prepared to listen and those who listen to His words each day.

This friendship is designed to be fruitful. Jesus says, **"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last."** This fruitfulness is not a result of our own efforts, but because of our remaining 'in Christ'. It's a fruitfulness that comes from the character His Spirit develops in us, and our contributions for His kingdom. It's a fruitfulness that brings glory to God, blessing to others, and fulfillment to us.

So, Christ's disciples should love as He loved, are always prepared to obey Him, listen to Him constantly, and bear the fruit He wants. This is what He taught 2000 years ago and what He wants in us today. Amen.

Reverend Paul Pritchard

NOTICES

PLANT SALE- St Johns Saturday 18th May, 10am-1pm. Advance Order forms for plants are available in the Link or by contacting Joy. Payment on the day. Deadline for orders is Friday 10th May. 515293 or via events-stjohns@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk

HELP NEEDED- The Our Mickleover spring fair **Sunday 26th May** 3pm-6:30pm. The Mickleover Churches Together are running a tombola in aid of Padley, we need suitable prizes donated and plenty of volunteers on the day. We will need a number of helpers for at least half an hour or more before the start for setting up the stall, and then helping staff the stall during the fair, particularly during the first hour or two - things may quieten down a bit after the initial rush. We'll also need help to dismantle and put things away after. Please speak to Mike Shooter for details.

THY KINGDOM COME- is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for friends and family to come to know Jesus. It started in 2016 as an invitation from our Archbishops to the Church of England and has grown internationally and ecumenically. This year we invite you to be a part of this from Ascension to Pentecost (9th-19th May). In each church you will find **Novena study guides** for the 10-day period, also a **Prayer Journal**, a great way to note prayers and the answers that come. Please do take one or both of these for your own use. Each day we will be meeting to **pray for our community in All Saints church at 8am** and all are welcome. On 8th May the Vicarage home group will be setting up **Prayer stations in All Saints church** for use in the 10 days so do come and make use of them either with your home group or when you are in the church on Wednesday or Sunday. (We are hoping to open the church on other mornings too. Please contact Peter if you can help to steward) or, you can use the posters in the graveyard to pray outdoors. Please do join with us. *Helen*

CONFIRMATION- We are in the process of arranging a Confirmation service with Bishop Malcolm in the summer or early autumn. If anyone hasn't been confirmed but would like to find out more, please speak to Peter or one of the clergy team.

TEAS ON THE VICARAGE LAWN- Our Mickleover Fete **Sunday 26th May**. Yes, we are doing it again, to bless our community. For this event we would like: **Help on Saturday 25th May to set up** tables, chairs, tents etc, **Bakers** to provide lovely cakes – tray bakes, cupcakes, large cakes etc, **Helpers on the day** to help serve. We will be covering 2 hours from 3-5pm. (hope to have enough help to do 2 shifts of 1 hour) Always great fun! Please could you email me on helenwalley@btinternet.com or text or call me on 01332 513793 (please leave a message if you don't get through) if you can help in anyway. More details nearer the time. *Helen Walley*