

Welcome to our Churches

www.mickleoveranglicans.org.uk

All Saints

Etwall Road, Mickleover,
DE3 0DL
01332 510446



allsaintsadmin@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk

St Andrews

School Lane, Radbourne,
DE6 4LY



admin-stjohns@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk

St Johns

Devonshire Drive, Mickleover,
DE3 9HD
01332 513363



Sunday 25th August 2024

Services In Our Churches This Sunday:

- Morning Worship at All Saints, 10am. Peter Walley will be speaking.
- Holy Communion at Johns, 10am. Paul Pritchard will be speaking.
- BCP Evening Prayer at St Andrews, 4pm. Led by Paul Pritchard.

Live Link for Sunday's service: <https://mickleoveranglicans.org.uk/you-tube-services/>

Midweek Services

- Tuesday: Prayers, 8am at All Saints
- Wednesdays: Holy Communion, 9.30am at All Saints

Collect

Almighty God,
You search us and know us:
may we rely on you in strength
and rest on you in weakness,
now and in all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

This Sunday's Readings at All Saints

Deuteronomy 15: 7-11, Mark 12: 28-34

This Sunday's Readings at St Johns

Ephesians 6: 10-20, John 6: 56-69

Next Sunday's Readings

James 1: 17 - end

Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

All Saints Café - 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 - Friday mornings 10am-1pm in the Link. Do join us for Tea/Coffee, friendly conversation, and delicious home-made cakes. There will be children's activities alongside the Rest Stop Café on Friday's. Come along and join us!

St Johns Brunch – Fridays 12.15-2.30pm (after the Café). We join with others for a cup of soup & sandwich followed by discussion on life and faith and a bit of Bible study.

The Whole Armour of God: Ephesians 6:10-20

This morning's passage in Ephesians is the subject of many reflections. So you may feel you know all about this subject today, but as far as I am concerned, I still need to learn much more about it for me to understand its full potential for my daily walk of faith.

When we think of armies, they have always had two functions. One is to keep the peace, the other is to attack and defeat an enemy. The metaphor of Christian warfare is used throughout Scripture. If we wish to follow Jesus Christ, we must acknowledge that it's a series of challenges or battles and even if you don't believe in a devil or Satan – Jesus certainly did and so do I. The evidence is all around us, everyday we see the results of his manipulating vulnerable and avaricious people. But, returning to the metaphor, an army's success is totally dependent upon the competence and foresight of its leader.

The good news for us is that our Lord is totally competent in all things. He is all powerful (omnipotent), all knowing (omniscient), and present everywhere (omnipresent). There are many today who deride this. But God cannot be overcome by Satan and knows the end from the beginning and will gloriously win the final battle.

But we do at the outset need to understand what or who we are fighting?

We often see many comedy sketches and parodies, ridiculing Christians, church ministers or church attenders when they show their human frailties. Sometimes they are even portrayed in fairy stories as knights in shining armour rescuing fair damsels or searching for the Holy Grail. The readers of Paul's letter in Ephesus knew what warfare was really like, the Roman army was a daily reality. It was brutal and bloody, and those involved in battle needed all the protection they could acquire for the fighting they had to face. So, Paul's illustration was readily understood.

Paul clarifies what warfare for a follower of Jesus Christ is all about ***"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God."*** 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 Satan desires to deceive us by making us trivialise the whole idea of a warfare against him and his influencers. But I am sure you can see, as I can, how today through much of social media and media in general evil has such a destructive effect on people's lives.

The symbols of armour which Paul uses are metaphors for fighting the Christian battles. In today's world, swords, helmets, breastplates and such historical armour offer little protection in a world of high-tech, missiles, drones and cyber-attacks, but then God has given us far more effective weapons for our spiritual battles.

One of the issues we have heard of recently in Russia and Ukraine is the need for soldiers to be trained in the use of their weapons and that applies just as much to us with our spiritual weapons. Armour is always designed for the front not the back of the soldier as they were never intended to run away from battle. Many have died retreating from the battlefield. In the same way, our Christian armour is meant for us to fight Satan and not to run from the battle.

So, Paul uses armour as a metaphor to describe the equipment God has provided us with for our battle against Satan. Firstly, he tells us to be confident in the Lord. It isn't armour which makes the difference, but it's the Holy spirits help we need.

Then he says we need to be thoroughly equipped because Satan is cunning and deceitful. He echoes the passage he wrote to the Corinthians by telling us our warfare is not against humans, but against spiritual powers.

But we have been given everything necessary to stand against such wickedness, **to stand our ground**. He then starts listing the individual pieces of armour. Beginning with the '**belt of truth**'. A Roman soldier's loins were poorly protected, because the priority was for their legs to move freely, so they used their shield and sword to protect them. So, the other armour helps protect 'the truth' when the enemy tries to deceive them. But we must be confident of this truth. He then refers to '**body armour**'. For Romans this protected the heart and other vital organs from swords, arrows, fiery darts, and spears. In our spiritual battles, we should remember that this armour has been provided for us. It isn't our righteousness but Christ's we rely upon. The devil is constantly attacking us as worthless and so full of failure, but we can rely on Christ's righteousness which we have been graciously given to protect us and that is better protection than any suit of armour.

Paul then refers to '**shoes**'. Roman soldiers wore sandals, which were comfortable helping them make long marches and keeping them from slipping. But our shoes are for us to make peace. This clearly shows how different the Christian warfare is than the world's battles. We meet those who oppose us with the peace of Christ who set us the perfect example. The roads we must travel are challenging and slippery. But when we wear the shoes of peace, we can stand.

The '**shield of faith**' comes next. A Shield when properly used protects the entire body and can be lifted over the head to deflect any ammunition that was being shot from above. Their comrades would do the same, so few arrows or darts would find their mark. So, Paul tells us to prioritise this as faith is the gift of God to protect us and others. Hence our responsibility to strengthen those who are weaker in faith. We need to always encourage one another.

Penultimately, he talks of the '**helmet of salvation**'. Which was to protect the brain, which controls the actions of the body. Our helmet is not made of brass or iron, but of salvation. Earthly helmets often failed. But we are protected by the salvation which Jesus purchased for us on Calvary. Goliath was killed by the failure of his helmet to protect him from a stone. But we can stand secure on Christ's promises.

The final piece is the '**sword of the Spirit**' which is the Word of God. The Romans were expert at using all kinds of swords for the purpose of killing the enemy. But our sword is not given to kill but to bring people alive. We must learn how to skilfully use God's word in countering the enemy's accusations and lies as our Lord demonstrated in the desert. Paul tells us the proper use of the sword is praying for each other, being watchful, and persevering. He also says it's to be used in defence mode. He was a prisoner, and Satan tried to use his imprisonment as a means of discouraging him and silencing him. But Paul realised He needed to be upheld by the Spirit. He needed the prayer of others as well. Similarly, we need each other, and we need to fight the Christian battle as one. The final battle has been won by Christ already, so let's boldly follow Him, seeing that He has thoroughly equipped us for the task. May we encourage each other and learn to use our armaments well.

Reverend Paul Pritchard

Notices

Church Walking Group - Saturday 24th August. Meeting at All Saints Car Park by 9.30am

Pre-Diabetes & Diabetes Advice – at Mickleover Library, Holly End Road, DE3 0EA. Wednesday 28th August 1-3pm. Specialist advice and education provided for pre-diabetes diagnosis, early diagnosis, long term diabetes and osteoporosis & bone health.

Congratulations – to Andrew Brown and Joanna Gar on their wedding blessing at St Johns on Thursday 29th August at midday.

St Andrew's Church Open Morning – Saturday 31st August 11am-3pm. Tea/coffee and homemade cakes available. Hear about the history of the 13th century church. See a display of Radbourne memorabilia. Donations towards upkeep of St Andrews Church.

Photographer – or Not – See the Peter Marlow English Cathedrals Exhibition at the Derby Cathedral. Views taken from the naves at dawn, no artificial light. Beauty in stone. Ends on 1st September.

CTM Prayer Walk – 5th September 10:15am. We will meet at the memorial Hall on Station Road. Then we walk for about an hour praying for God's Blessing on our community, the local businesses, schools etc. Listening for anything the Holy Spirit might want to reveal to us. If you plan to come, please contact me at ray_lee16@yahoo.co.uk, or phone 239645 (answerphone screened), so I know to expect you. Thank you. *Ray Lee*

Pause and Ponder in All Saints Churchyard – 'Holiday Joy' as seen by 16yrs and under. Send a copy of the photo/s by email to the office by 6th Sept. No selfies!! Happy snapping! *Janice*

Our Dementia Choir – Saturday 21st September, 6pm at All Saints. As a Dementia friendly church, we are delighted to welcome the Dementia Choir along with the Brookfield School Choir for an evening of songs, lucky bag raffle and refreshments. Tickets £15, available at St John's and All Saints offices. *Please bring the right money if possible.*

Confirmation With Bishop Malcolm - at All Saints Church on 22nd September at 6.30pm.

All Saints Giving in Grace - If you have not received a Giving in Grace Booklet, they are available on the table to the right of the main door as you enter Church. There is also a box there for written replies.

All Saints Messy Church - We are considering restarting a midweek Messy Church. Clare will be coordinating this. If you would like to be involved, helping with refreshments or assisting with the craft activities, please contact Clare by email revceowen@gmail.com