

Welcome to our Churches

www.mickleoveranglicans.org.uk

All Saints

Etwall Road, Mickleover,
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St Andrews

School Lane, Radbourne,
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St Johns

Devonshire Drive, Mickleover,
DE3 9HD
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Sunday 15th December 2024



Services In Our Churches This Sunday

- Holy Communion at All Saints, 10am. Ian Godlington will be speaking.
- Christingle with JACK at St Johns, 10am. Karen Cowgill will be speaking.
- Nine Lessons and Carols, 6.30pm. Led by Paul Pritchard.

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

Midweek Services and Events

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

Collect

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the
way of your Son: give us courage to speak
the truth, to hunger for justice, and to
suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sunday's Reading

Philippians 4: 4-7, Luke 3: 7-18

Next Sunday's Reading

Hebrews 10: 5-10, Luke 1: 39-55

St Johns Internet Café – Mondays 10am-12pm in the Link. Free help with laptops, tablets, smartphones and other technology. Free Wi-Fi.

All Saints Café - Join us for a friendly chat, coffee/tea, cake and biscuits every Wednesday in the Centre 10am-12noon. Everyone welcome!

St Johns Rest Stop Café - Fridays 10am-12pm in the Link. Join us for Tea/Coffee, friendly conversation, and delicious home-made cakes. **Brunch** follows the café from 12.15 – 2.30pm. We join with others for a cup of soup & sandwich followed by discussion on life, faith and a bit of Bible study.

Talk for Notice sheet based on Malachi 3: 1 – 4 Luke 3: 1 – 6

Have you had to wait in for a parcel delivery recently or indeed for someone to come to fix something? Sometimes, it really doesn't matter as we will be there all day, at other times we feel constrained or impatient because we have things to do, phone calls to make, people to see....and we can feel up tight. Imagine however waiting over 600 years for a promise to be fulfilled. That is the length of time that the people of Israel had to wait..... that takes patience!

Here, the prophet Malachi gives God's word in response to the people, who at the end of Chapter 2 had complained "where is the God of Justice?" To that question in Malachi's day the answer came back: You will be surprised, suddenly, when you don't expect him, the Messiah will appear in his Temple.

That cry for justice might so easily be expressed today by our brothers and sisters in the faith, in the lands of the Bible as persecutions continue which means yet more sorrow and griefs to bear. If we were in the same situation, we too might be saying "where is the God of Justice?"

In Syria, it seems though the Assad regime is finally over. Even the Russians have deserted him. Like other Dictators across the Middle East, Assad and his Father were known for the brutal suppression of all opposition, many people have been waiting for the day when the regime fell. Opposition forces range from extreme Islamist to secular. Somehow, they will all need to find an accommodation so that Syria doesn't yet again fall into civil war, as Iraq did following the fall of Saddam Hussein. We need to pray for peace above all and against revenge killings.

Let's turn briefly to Malachi, verses 1 and 2 again. Given what we now know now, verses 1 and 2 encapsulate both Jesus' first and second comings.

Mal 3:1 "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

Before Jesus' first coming, the messenger role was fulfilled by John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin. Jesus described John as having the spirit of Elijah, someone whose calling was to preach for repentance (turning of people's hearts back to God). In verse 2: 2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap.

And so the prophecy moves on to the second coming, as Malachi talks about the endurance needed on the day of his coming because he will come as one who refines silver – cleaning out the dross and the impurities. This is such a powerful image.

Sometimes on the programmes about archaeology, the presenters set about creating a furnace in which is placed a crucible with the metal ore, the charcoal is heated until

it is white hot, and then the ore melts, the liquid metal is formed, the dross comes to the surface and then the molten metal is poured out into a mould. The other image is that of launderer's soap. Soap adverts always promise the nearly impossible it seems to me with wine stains, or even worse, tomato stains. There is always a genuine delight when the stain disappears. But often it doesn't happen instantly.

And what of our gospel reading? Luke, like the precise doctor he is, tells us when John the Baptist appeared by reference to the various rulers then in power. In the days when the Bible was written the only way you could identify when an event happened was by comparing it to something or an event in someone else's life, so for example Isaiah 6:1 "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple."

Up until recently historians thought that some of these names in Luke were wrong because of other references to people with the same names who were in power at different times, however archaeologists have now confirmed that these named characters really were in power in different places at the same time. And so we can pretty accurately date this to 28 or 29 AD.

Devout Jews were and of course still are, keen for the arrival of the Messiah because it would lead to the salvation of the nation of Israel, but God had other ideas. A prophecy in Isaiah 49:6 spoke of a far greater salvation to come. Speaking about Jesus the prophecy said: 'It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.'

But how is that renewal and salvation to come? I believe, through belief in Jesus expressed in repentance and baptism – as John had told the people: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' (Isaiah 40:3)

Amazingly we read that many people came out of Jerusalem across the desert to be baptized by John. They came because they recognized in John the 'real deal' (in contrast with the priests and scribes of that age), John spoke his message with a confidence and a zeal that could only come from God. People listened and responded. Could we pray, and dare to hope that at least some who come through our doors this Christmas find what they are looking for in the baby born to be Messiah? Every blessing. Peter

Notices

Mickleover Singers Christmas Concert - Saturday 14th December at 7:30pm.

St Andrew's Carol Service – Sunday 22nd December at 4pm, joined by the All Saints Singers.

All Saints Carols by Candlelight – Sunday 22nd December at 7pm. Readers needed! There is a sign-up sheet at the back of church. Please take the numbered reading that you have signed up for.

Our Love Prayers & Sympathy - To the family of Cynthia Farmer who passed away suddenly on 7th December. Funeral details to follow.

- To the family of Kenneth Sharpe. The funeral will be at All Saints Church followed by burial in the Churchyard on 23rd December at 11am.
- To the family of John Taylor. The funeral will be on Thursday 2nd January at 12noon at All Saints Church, followed by committal at Markeaton Crematorium at 1pm.
- To the family of Harry Bedborough who passed away last week. Funeral details to follow.

All Saints Christmas Tree Festival – Thank you all for your help to make this event a success again this year. We have again welcomed new people into our church, had people returning again, after visiting for the first time last year, and we have people who said they will come back for a Carol Service. So thank you stewards for your lovely welcome to our visitors and many congratulations to All Saints Stitchers for gaining 2nd place in the 'My Favourite Tree' voting! Advance notice, the underlying theme for next year.... Cinderella!! Thank you, again. *Janice and Ian - Churchwardens*

St John's Rest Stop Café – Join us each week in the build up to Christmas from 29th November for craft activities and a Carol service on 20th December at 11.30am with dedications for the memory tree. Please see the website for more details.

Internet Cafe (Christmas Break) - is taking a break for Christmas - we won't be open on Monday 23rd or Monday 30th of December. We expect to be back for The New Year on Monday 6th January.

Blister Pack Recycling - a box filled with blister packs has been sent for recycling and an empty box now needs to be filled - so please bring your empty pill packs along to St Johns Vestry.

Carol Singers Needed! – We will be visiting Curzon Court on Tuesday 17th December at 4pm to sing for the residents. If you would like to come along and sing, please let Peter or Clare know. Carol singers are also needed at the Mickleover Library for their carol singing on Monday 23rd December 1pm – 2.30pm.

Gently into Christmas - was streamed to YouTube, link is on Website, for the benefit of those who would like to see it and were unable to attend last Sunday at St Johns.

All Saints Welcomers' Rota - The new Welcomers'/Sidespersons' Rota for January - March is at the back of church ... it's bright green this time... you can't miss it!! Also, if anyone is interested, 'The Nutcracker' ballet is being streamed to cinemas on Tuesday evening December 17th. *Janice - Churchwarden*