

Welcome to our Churches

www.mickleoveranglicans.org.uk

All Saints

Etwall Road, Mickleover,
DE3 0DL
01332 510446



St Andrews

School Lane, Radbourne,
DE6 4LY



St Johns

Devonshire Drive, Mickleover,
DE3 9HD
01332 513363



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Sunday 8th December 2024



Services In Our Churches This Sunday

- Christingle at All Saints, 10am. Mary Staunton will be speaking.
- Holy Communion at St Johns, 10am. Ingrid Munro will be speaking.
- Holy Communion at St Andrew's, 11am. Led by Clare Owen.
- Gently Into Christmas at St John's, 4pm. Led by Clare Owen.

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

Almighty God,
purify our hearts and minds,
that when your Son Jesus Christ comes
again as judge and Saviour
we may be ready to receive him,
who is our Lord and our God. **Amen**

Sunday's Reading

Philippians 1: 3-11, Luke 3: 1-6

Next Sunday's Reading

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

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.

Advent 1 Jer 33.14-16 and Luke 21.25-36

If you walk around our city, you would be forgiven for thinking that Christmas is already upon us – our streets are lined with decorations, shops are filled with Christmas treats and gifts, and you can settle down at home to any one of **countless** Christmas films that transport you to a world filled with joy, laughter and snow. Yet Christmas is not yet here! Today we are beginning our journey through Advent, and we have a number of weeks yet to go before Christmas is truly here.

I have always loved the buildup to Christmas, yet advent has a beauty and meaning of its own, and if we do not take the time to consider Advent itself, we miss out upon an important opportunity to focus upon our faith at this time of year.

The season of Advent in the early church lasted 40 days – very much a parallel to lent but has long since developed to focus upon the period including the four Sunday before Christmas itself. In the darkest and gloomiest period of the year, we are given the time to focus upon the promise of God to send light and hope into the world. This is what our journey through the advent wreath is about and it is what our readings today both focused upon.

Each of the four Advent Sundays remind us of those who prepared for the coming of Christ. This morning we lit the first candle, and our prayers focused upon the ‘The Patriarchs’ - Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. Next week, the candle representing ‘The Prophets’ gives an opportunity to reflect upon the way the birth of the Messiah was ‘foretold’. On the third Sunday of Advent we will remember John the Baptist, who proclaimed the Saviour, and on the fifth Sunday, Mary, who bore Jesus in her womb. Our final candle, lit on Christmas Day, welcomes Jesus himself into the world.

Our first reading this morning from the book of Jeremiah, is part of that foretelling by the Prophets which we will mark next week. Our Gospel reading is also part of this journey, yet focuses upon the prophecies made by Jesus himself. The prophesy of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, like the readings from the book of revelation which we have been journeying with during the past weeks within our daily readings, are amongst some of the most difficult in the Bible to understand. The often-graphic images of the end-times can be too much for many of us. Readings which talk about signs in the sun, moon and the stars are difficult to understand, and the prospect of the end of all we know, is daunting, even unthinkable.

Yet, the prophesy by Jesus, recounted in Luke this morning, together with that made in Jeremiah, contain a golden thread which also runs through Advent, into Christmas, and then into the new year, all the way through to Easter and beyond.

This thread is God's love and grace, God's promise to us: to not desert us even when things appear at their most desperate.

Jeremiah foretold the messiah's coming, which was fulfilled in Jesus, and which we will celebrate upon Christmas morning. In Luke, Jesus himself is promising us the kingdom of God, which will come at a time still yet unknown to us. Each part of the Church year, marking the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, also marks distinct aspects of humanities relationship with God. The one constant throughout however is God's never-ending love and grace, even when we might find it difficult to see or understand.

It is not by accident that we mark advent with the lighting of candles, nor that we decorate our homes and streets with light at this time. As Christians, we believe that Jesus is the light of the world, and that light entered the world through his miraculous birth. Advent is that time of the year when we can reflect upon the promise of that light to the world. Just as Lent is the time for us to prepare for that time when Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice to fulfil God's promises at the end of his earthly life; Advent is the time for us to dwell upon the promise of his birth, and to take stock of what his birth meant for the world, and for us individually.

As well as the Advent candles in Church, Advent calendars have developed to help us mark the passage of this season. This year you have umpteen options to choose from, from those containing pictures, ones with quotations, examples filled with chocolates, tea, or even cheese can be found. If you have more money than sense, then the world's most expensive one, is available in the USA and will require you to spend over ten million dollars if you wish to enjoy it!

If we put aside the obscenely expensive ones, they all have something in common – an opportunity to take a little time each day, out of our busy lives, to focus upon God's promise to humanity, in the form of that righteous branch mentioned in Jeremiah - That promise which we now know will be fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. For so long, how that promise would be fulfilled was not known, just as we do not know when or how the promises made my Jesus to us in our Gospel reading, about the kingdom of God, will be fulfilled. As the birth of Jesus fulfilled God's promise to us, we know that one day Jesus's promise to us **will** also be fulfilled.

So before we reach Christmas Day itself, I would like to encourage all of us to not fast-forward, but to take the opportunity to live in the gift that is Advent itself and consider daily as we open our calendars or see the lights, what God's promises mean to each and every one of us. Amen

Yours in Christ
Rev Clare

Notices

All Saints Decorating for Christmas – Saturday 7th December from 10am

New Opera Company Christmas Concert – Sat 7th Dec at 2.30pm at St Johns

Christmas Tree Festival – Thank you all for your help, in whatever capacity, to make this event a success again this year. We have again welcomed new people into our church and we have had people returning again, after visiting for the first time last year, because they felt so welcomed. We have people who have said they will come back for a Carol Service; we have people who have moved to Mickleover who are going to give our service a try rather than travel the miles back to their 'old' church. So thank you stewards for your lovely welcome to our visitors and many congratulations to All Saints Stitchers for gaining second place in the 'My Favourite Tree' voting! Advance notice, the underlying theme for next year.... Cinderella!! Thank you, again. *Janice and Ian - Churchwardens*

Our Love, Prayers and Sympathy – to the family of Mary Ratcliff. The funeral will be on Thursday 12th December, 10am at Markeaton Crematorium, main chapel

Mickleover Singers Christmas Concert - “A European Celebration” on Saturday 14th December at 7:30pm. It will be held in the St. Johns. £8 on the door.

Welcomers at St John's - If anyone would like to join the team of welcomers doing a very important job at the 10am Sunday service at St John's, please speak to Joy Brandrick who is preparing the rota for 2025.

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.

All Saints Stitchers – Thank you to everyone who braved the bad weather to support us at the coffee morning on Wednesday. We raised £63.50 for Breast Cancer UK. We would also like to thank you for all the support at our craft and coffee sale on Sunday afternoon. The proceeds from the craft stall of £453 will be donated to Breast Cancer UK and the proceeds from the refreshments of £277 will be donated to All Saints Church funds.

All Saints Christmas Card – Please sign the paper at the back of church by 11th December to be included in this year's Christmas card.

St John's Christmas and Craft Fair – 30th November. A big thank you to all who contributed to this event. We raised an amazing £1,388.

Internet Cafe (Christmas Break) - Please note that Internet Cafe at St John's 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.