

# Welcome to our Churches

[www.mickleoveranglicans.org.uk](http://www.mickleoveranglicans.org.uk)

## All Saints

Etwell Road, Mickleover,  
DE3 0DL  
01332 510446



## St Andrew's

School Lane, Radbourne,  
DE6 4LY



## St John's

Devonshire Drive, Mickleover,  
DE3 9HD  
01332 513363



[admin@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk](mailto:admin@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk)

**Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the staff team  
Peter, Mary, Ian, Clare, Paul, Alun, Ingrid, Dawn, John, Helen, Judi and Karen.**

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025**



### Services In Our Churches This Sunday

- Holy Communion at All Saints, 10am. Peter Walley will be speaking.
- Nativity at JACK at St John's, 10am. Karen Cowgill will be speaking.
- Carols by Candlelight at St Andrew's, 4pm.
- Carols by Candlelight at All Saints, 7pm.

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

### Collect

Eternal God,  
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,  
so we wait for his coming in glory;  
bring us through the birth pangs of this  
present age  
to see, with her, our great salvation  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### This Sunday's Reading

Isaiah 7: 10-16, Matthew 1: 18-end

### Next Sunday's Reading

Jeremiah 31: 15-17, Matthew 2: 13-18

### Midweek Services and Groups

Mondays	<b>St John's Internet Café</b> 10am – 12pm in St John's Link. <i>Returns 5<sup>th</sup> Jan</i>
Tuesdays	<b>Prayers</b> 8am at All Saints.
Wednesdays	<b>Holy Communion</b> 9.30am at All Saints.
Wednesdays	<b>All Saints Café</b> 10am – 12pm in the Centre.
Fridays	<b>St John's Rest Stop Café</b> 10am – 12pm in the Link. <i>Not open Boxing Day</i>
Fridays	<b>Brunch Bible Study</b> 12.15 – 2.30pm in the St John's Link.

## How should we treat the Advent season?

These last weeks, I've been challenged to think of advent as holding on in times of darkness, finding treasure in unexpected places, and letting God's light shine, in the expectation that things can be different. If he told his disciples he is coming back – he will indeed come back. In the mean-time as we wait, we also look for signs of the Holy Spirit's work.

Whereas in Lent (the greatest season of preparation), our image is that of Jesus spending 40 days in the wilderness, or the people of Israel wandering around the Sinai-peninsula for 40 years under judgement, in Advent our biblical images are of people by and large going about their daily business, but then being surprised by God's arrival among them.

## Think of Mary receiving the Angel Gabriel for example

Mary was just going about her daily life. She had had the excitement of getting to know Joseph and was no doubt hoping that they would soon be betrothed, when the Angel came to her with his staggering news. Mary was understandably perplexed. 'What does this mean?'

And here in our Gospel reading today, we have a similar perplexed, maybe even disappointed reaction to the lack of hell, fire and brimstone in Jesus' early ministry by his cousin, John the Baptist.

*Mt 11:2 When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples <sup>3</sup> to ask him, **"Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect another?"***

*<sup>4</sup>Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. <sup>6</sup>Blessed are those who do not fall away on account of me."*

One could forgive John for being puzzled. Back in Matthew 3: 11 and 12 after condemning the religious teachers of the day, John prophesied that the one to come after him would *'clear the threshing-floor, gathering all the wheat into his barn and would burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'*

The religious leadership in Israel was indeed far from ideal. It needed to be challenged and shaken up. It had grown complacent, but most importantly it was far from God's vision for godly leadership after God's own heart.

But there are two parts to Isaiah's prophecy namely: the powerful judgement which John the Baptist latched on to, but also the promise of hope which Jesus used at the very beginning of his ministry: *<sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.*

Between Isaiah speaking and Jesus coming there was over 600 years, and during those years it felt like God was on mute. No words of encouragement, nothing to hold on to.

The feeling was that God had gone behind a dark cloud and that he was no longer interested in Israel's welfare.

And for some, that is what it has either felt like in the past or may even be what faith feels like now. Our faith is still real, but we feel like we are in perpetual darkness. Well, the first thing I want to say is that you are not alone.

Many of the great saints in history have had the same experience – from Mother Teresa of Calcutta to St John of the Cross. St John coined the phrase, 'the dark night of the soul'. And if that is where you think you are – hold on! Don't give up – God and we are with you.

If we are going through those tough times, what is the point? I think the best way to describe it is a 'refining' or as John the Baptist put it: baptizing with fire. Burning away the chaff. Bringing us to the point where only one thing matters – our trust in Jesus Christ, in him crucified and our resurrected King.

**Returning to our Gospel reading:** Jesus was teaching from a very different script to the one that John thought he should. Instead of issuing threats of divine judgement, Jesus was going around befriending tax-collectors and 'sinners', people who strictly religious Jews would never associate with, let alone eat with. Jesus was gaining a great reputation but not in ways that John recognised.

**So, what is our message this Christmas?** Quite simply, Jesus was no ordinary child, he was conceived by the empowering of the Holy Spirit on his mother Mary, he was born at a particular time in a particular place, he became a refugee in Egypt. On his return he grew up to be a man, he preached about the Kingdom of God, he called people to change their ways, to follow him. He called ordinary people like you and me to believe in his message. He showed the most amazing compassion and love and healing to everyone he met. Yet in the end, he was condemned, he died on the cross and gave his life for the sins of the world, and on the third day was raised to new life.

Most importantly, Jesus promised eternal life to everyone who believes in him, and this is good news! In fact, it is the best news ever. And just case you think you are not good enough to follow him, no-one is: "we are just like you, we mess up, we get it wrong, but God gave us a fresh start – so do come and join us in our journey".

Amen? **Amen!** Every blessing for Christmas. *Peter and Helen*

## Notices

**All Saints Stitchers** – Would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported us this year. The total amount raised this year is £3300 – which will be divided equally between Brain Tumour Research and The Children's Brain Tumour Research Fund. We would also like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

**Christmas Tree Festival** – Thank you to everyone who helped organise, steward, donated and came along to the Christmas Tree Festival last month. We raised £563.34 which has been split between Derby Food 4 Thought, All Saints Church and A.DE.VU.DE (Burundi charity).

**Church Office** – will be closed from 22<sup>nd</sup> December – 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026.

**New Year Course** - Peter will be hosting the Bible Society's Bible Course in the Vicarage starting on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January from 7.30pm. The course aims to deepen understanding of the Bible and it is suitable if you're new to the Bible, just curious about it or you've been reading it for years. This is an 8 session, small group resource and it includes video teaching, discussions, a reading plan, a handbook (£10) and extra content. Please do get in touch with Peter, peterwalley@btinternet.com or phone him on 07725740407 if you are interested.

**Tea With Trev's Trio** – Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2pm at St John's Hall. An afternoon of live swing-based music from around the world. Tickets £8, contact Joy 01332 515293 or Richard 01332 493939. **Please call to reserve a seat.**

**Cheese & Wine Beetle Drive** – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at All Saints Centre, 6.30pm. Come along for cheese, wine and friendly competition. Tickets £5 speak to Janice or Rebekah for more information.

**Midweek Matinee** – Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January at 2pm All Saints Centre. This month's film is 'Calendar Girls'. Tickets £5 adults and £2 children (drink and popcorn included).

Upcoming Christmas Services at Our Churches			
<b>Christmas Eve Wednesday</b>	2pm, 4pm & 6pm	Family Carols	All Saints
	4pm	Carols Around the Crib	St John's
	11pm	Midnight Communion	All Saints
	11pm	Midnight Communion	St John's
<b>Christmas Day Thursday</b>	10am	Holy Communion	All Saints
	10am	Holy Communion	St John's
	11am	Holy Communion	St Andrew's

#### **Christmas Eve Collect**

Eternal God, in the stillness of this night  
you sent your almighty Word  
to pierce the world's darkness with the  
light of salvation: give to the earth the  
peace that we long for  
and fills our hearts with the joy of heaven  
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

#### **Christmas Day Collect**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
your birth at Bethlehem  
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven  
touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise  
as we worship you  
our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.

#### **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December**

***Said MA Holy Communion at All Saints  
10am. There will be no service at  
St John's or St Andrew's.***

#### **Collect**

God in Trinity, eternal unity of perfect love:  
gather the nations to be one family,  
and draw us into your holy life  
through the birth of Emmanuel,  
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.