



ALL SAINTS CHURCH, MICKLEOVER

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A warm welcome to All Saints
22nd August 2021

SUNDAY SERVICES

Every Sunday there will be a service in church and online

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES- There will be Communion services at both Churches this Sunday. 10.15am service at All Saints (Peter Walley will be speaking) and 4pm service at St. Johns (Alun Rowlands will be speaking). If you have a face covering, please bring it with you and wear it. Sanitiser should still be used.

ONLINE SUNDAY 10AM ZOOM SERVICE- via Zoom (*please login between 9.45-9.55am*) Paul Pritchard will be speaking. Meeting ID: 829 074 1760, Password: 840489

Collect

God of constant mercy,
Who sent your Son to save us:
Remind us of your goodness,
Increase your grace within us,
That our thankfulness may grow,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

This Sundays Readings

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

Next Sundays Readings

James 1: 1-17, Mark 7: 1-8,
14, 15, 21-23

Hymns on Zoom and in Church

And can it be?
All I once held dear
Facing a task unfinished
God is working his purpose out

NEW CHURCH EMAIL- We are transitioning to a new email address, please use the new one going forward allsaintsadmin@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk The current email address will still be open for a while whilst everything is moved across.

WEDNESDAY INDIVIDUAL PRAYER IN CHURCH- 10am-12pm.

A REFLECTION BY PAUL PRITCHARD

To know 'Him' more.

Have you ever thought how you get to know someone new? You can listen to what they say, watch what they do, how they behave, and how they treat others. What kind of words they use, are they honest, are they kind, are they helpful? John wrote his gospel to introduce his readers to Jesus if they hadn't personally met Him. Paul acted similarly by writing his letters and talking about Him to all he met. They were both amazing Ambassadors for Christ.

John shows us Christ by what He did, and what He said. We hear about turning water into wine, healing a paralytic, and raising the Lazarus from his grave and so much more. He also records the famous I AM sayings, "I am the Light of the World. I am the Good Shepherd. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" etc. And during the last few weeks we have been considering "***I am the bread of life***". To remind us of the context; Jesus had fed 5000, from a small picnic lunch. It was an amazing demonstration of His concern and ability to meet the immediate needs of those who followed Him. The next day, the people are still following him, but seem to be only looking for food. So He says to them, "you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs."

They had missed the point. They had their free lunch, but now they expected Jesus to be a 'food-bank', an endless source of free food, open 24/7.

But Jesus wasn't talking about nutritious bread, but about what we all need for the full life He offers!

Jesus says, "***He who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst***". The reality is that, apart from Christ, we will always be hungry and thirsty for something.

But He warns the crowds that following him, is not an easy option. Many couldn't cope and left Him. But, believing in Jesus is not reciting a creed, it's building a relationship with him. For us to believe in him is to have a continual hunger for Christ, to know Him better and better, and to enjoy what He gives us.

And that's the connection between our Gospel reading and Paul's comments to his friends at Ephesus; following Christ isn't an easy option! Even though we may be longing to live closer to our Lord, in my experience it doesn't change the challenges we face, because it is a battle, so that is why Paul tells us to be prepared and put on the full armour of God, "***so that you will be able to stand firm against all the strategies of the devil.***" Paul explains that life's battles aren't against human armies, but against Satan and his demonic forces. So, this really isn't a very popular recruiting campaign, is it? Paul continues by emphasising that while the true nature of our battles are spiritual, most of them are fought in our thought life. He says it's a battle for the control of our minds "***let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes!***"

While it is a scary thought about our Christian lives being battlegrounds, we have the greatest weapon which Satan and his demonic forces can't defeat - we have God's Spirit within us.

Paul encourages us by saying "And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.... for we have the mind of Christ". How sad and tragic that we don't see more of us thinking 'Christ like thoughts and attitudes'!

Now, there is an old expression that says, "We are what we eat." And to an extent this is correct. In other words, if all we eat are Pizzas, then we'll end up looking like a Pizza. But I believe a more accurate phrase is 'we are what we think'. So, Paul encourages us to: ***"fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise."***

To fight this battle for our minds, we need to avoid all that hinders and cripples our thoughts and concentrate on what is good and true; rather than what is corrupt and false. Solomon said: ***"As a person thinks, that is who they are."***

So, Paul finally sums up his message by warning us ***"not to be conformed to this world, but rather be transformed by the renewing of our minds"***. When it comes to our minds, such pressures to conform are found in what we spend our time with. So, we need to be careful what we read, and what we watch, because they influence our way of thinking and distract us from feeding on God's ways.

Even though we have been "born again," "forgiven", and are "new creations" in Christ, our minds are still programmed to live independently from God, and since we have no 'keyboard delete keys', we need to be careful what we expose our minds to. It was interesting to read recently that Diane Louise Jordan, the 'Blue Peter' and 'Songs of Praise' presenter, said "I'm now devouring my Bible in the same insatiable way some devour a best-selling novel". So let's daily renew our minds with God's word.

Even David said, ***"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!"***.

Today, I believe we need to seriously consider our thought life and specifically invest in reading God's word. Only then will we know Him more and enjoy more the "full life" He offers us.

NOTICES

ALPHA- we are planning to start the next Online Alpha course on Thursday 30th September. Alpha has now run very successfully online as a joint church activity over several courses. We are looking for a couple of people who may like to help run the course and participate in discussion groups (training is given). If you feel called to help Alpha, then please contact Brian Stanton or email alpha@mickleoveranglicans.org.uk Also, if you would like to attend the course, please make a note of the date and start time and send an email to the 'Alpha' email address.

TUESDAY MORNING CAFÉ- Please join us at the All Saints car park cafe for a chat and drink on Tuesday from 10am -12pm. All welcome!

DOMESTIC CLEANER WANTED- if you are a domestic cleaner and are able to help a member of the congregation, please get in touch with the office for more information.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING- We will be holding a Macmillan Coffee morning outside St. John's 10am-12pm on 3rd September (weather permitting, inside if not!) Please put the date in your diary. Help on the day will be needed along with offers to bake cakes and donate raffle prizes. Please contact me if you can offer anything towards this wonderful charity. *Alun*

THE REST STOP CAFÉ- Friday mornings 10am-12pm on St. John's car park. Come along and perhaps bring a friend! Can you offer some time to help on rota? Thanks. *Alun*

ST JOHNS CRAFT AND TABLETOP SALE- Saturday 16th October 10am-1pm. refreshments available throughout, light lunches served 11.30am-12.30pm. To book a table (£10) 01332 510809/515293 treasurer@stjohnsmickleover.org.uk

CTM PRAYER WALK – Thursday 2nd September 10-15am. Meet at St. John's Car Park. We walk for about an hour in the local streets, praying for God's blessing upon the people, community, and businesses in the area. Listening to God for anything He may want to show us. If you would like to join, please contact me Thanks.

GENERAL SYNOD ELECTIONS – Nominations for general Synod are now open. Any electoral roll member can stand but has to be nominated by a Deanery Synod Member. This is an opportunity to represent the church at national level and help formulate national church policy. Nominations close on 1st September. Please pray for those nominated. If you wish to stand for nomination, or for further information contact the office.

OUR SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS- go to the family of Mary Cook. The funeral is on Wednesday 25th August at 2pm at Markeaton Round Chapel.

SETTING GOD'S PEOPLE FREE– as you know, the different groups have been working on a variety of ideas, and we feel that before we move forward in a major way it would be good to pray together as a wider church community. Everyone is invited to come to a lunchtime picnic on Sunday 19th September. This will be an opportunity to hear more about the ideas that are emerging, share in prayer and enjoy a picnic together. Please make a note of the date.