

St. John's, Lindow

IN TOUCH

Serving Christ, Serving one another

*And whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.
For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

Mark 10:44-45

www.saint-johns.org.uk

SIMON'S SCRAWL

by Simon Gales

When we think about serving as Christians we often think about what we do in church but serving Jesus is much wider than that - it is in your home, at your work, or in someone else's home. To get our service of Jesus right we need to begin by realising that supremely we don't serve him, he serves us!

Jesus said 'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.' Mark 10:45

When the uniquely powerful and majestic Son of Man came to live in his world, he came to his subjects but he did not expect to be served! This is bizarrely different to what we might expect from such a mighty King, the one who's in charge of everyone and everything! ' He chose the fisherman Peter to be his follower, but it wasn't because he needed Peter's fish! He chose Matthew the tax collector but not because he wanted his accounts done! Today Jesus says 'Follow me' to us as he did to Peter and Matthew but he's not saying 'Follow me, so that you can serve me'. No, he's saying 'Follow me and I will serve you'. Jesus' greatness is not that he can command the service of millions; it is that he serves millions.

If you follow Jesus then your relationship with him, your status before God, will never depend on how you

serve him. Jesus loves us enough to come and rescue us from hell. He went through the hell of being cut off from God; he died the death we deserve.

That was the ransom being paid. This is how Jesus Christ serves you! Sadly familiarity can breed contempt or complacency, so if you've known this for years, then, remember, there's nothing else like it!!

Often we expect that we must serve God if he is going to love us and accept us. But Jesus doesn't want servants, he wants friends. He did not come to teach us how to be worthy servants; he came to die because we are not worthy servants.

It's only when we see this that we know the joyful freedom of the Christian life, and then, ironically, we'll find that we're set free to serve him longer, harder, braver and truer than we ever could before!

Yours, in gratitude to him,
Simon



I'M NOT SURE WHO THIS IS GOING TO HURT MORE - HIM OR ME!



"THE CHURCH FAMILY HAD MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT THE FOCUS ON ACTS OF SERVICE."

**SKETCHY
THEOLOGY**

BY BEN HOLLINSHEAD

Marc Hollinshead recently chatted with Didge about her life, faith and her role as the pastoral care coordinator at St Johns.

Marc: So Didge, tell us a little about yourself:

Didge: Well when growing up, I went to school at a Catholic convent. Although I was very close to the nuns who ran it, there wasn't much religious instruction there. I remember going to the chapel after lunch to pray, but they were very formalised prayers.

Marc: So would you say that led you on any kind of spiritual journey?

Didge: Not particularly. It wasn't until I did nurse training that I started going to a Church of England church in South London with my family. I didn't know anything about Jesus at the time but I enjoyed helping with the various groups for children and mums and tots. The vicar there was in fact a curate of a church in Cumbria where Simon was also a curate!

Marc: Wow, that's quite remarkable! What caused you to leave the church in the end?

Didge: In 1999 we ended up moving up north but Johnny, my eldest son unfortunately got meningitis. This caused the vicar of my previous church to get in contact with Simon because of that link in Cumbria, and he introduced me to Maureen. She used to come round every week, providing incredible emotional and caring support. She was an invaluable source of help for us. When Johnny eventually recovered, I came to St John's and received a huge welcome.

Marc: That's great news. So was it from that point you began to gain more of an understanding of the Bible?

Didge: Definitely. I went to one of the courses at the vicarage and my family also got involved in the church. The ladies Bible study where I got to know women like Freddy and Joyce was when it began to



click into place. They were amazing mentor figures, and were extremely welcoming.

Marc: You're now also the pastoral care team coordinator for St Johns. How did that come about?

Didge: As my understanding of God grew through the Bible studies, Catherine Ranger asked me if I wanted to join the team, 8 or 9 years ago now! I've led it for around 5 years and I absolutely love it. As a district nurse I'm always helping others so it's just in my nature. The team feels like a family and looking back, I can see how God has led me to where I am now and provided me with these great skills.

Marc: And would you say that role has equipped you in the wider community?

Didge: It's certainly given me more confidence in helping others and telling them about Jesus. Although becoming a Christian was a longer and slower process for me, God has used all these points in my life to help me recognise how much deeper a relationship with him is than any other, which in turn has given me that confidence. I have St John's to thank for their amazing love and trust, and the wonderful women's Bible study group.

Marc: Well I think that's a great place to end our time, Didge. Thank you for sharing a bit of your journey with us.

MISSION UPDATE

Alejandro Mesco - Still Serving!

As many will know, our long-standing mission partner, Alejandro Mesco, is sadly no longer serving as bishop in the Diocese of Peru, and has decided not to continue in paid Christian ministry. However, he is still keen to be serving Christ in whatever time he has available, alongside earning some income.

He has recently written about the way he is seeking to serve:

'God is wonderful and amazing the way he makes things happen. . . Thank God for the talents that he has blessed me with and I want to put them at his service, now that I have more freedom to preach the gospel (Ed. he often felt restricted in his role as a bishop). On Tuesday nights there are 4 of us meeting for Bible study and I recently presented the vision for this year – that I will train these brothers to become leaders of small groups. I would love to have at least 4 homes this year studying the Bible. In the future more houses could arise and perhaps the Lord will lead us to become a new community/church. This vision has been running very hard in my mind in recent weeks and I hope that our Lord will confirm this to me. I am working on the translation and contextualization of some material from the UK.' (Ed. including the Identity course written by Lee McMunn).

At the moment we are attending an evangelical church. Doris has found a friend and feels very well and also our children are attending which makes me very happy.

Recently a Christian lady gave me a small puppet and it is an interesting experience for me. Our daughter Helen is very fond of puppets and wants to do shows at the weekends in some of the squares in Arequipa and Carlos plays guitar, so we have a family team willing to serve God! With these puppets I want to teach the children about Jesus - it's amazing how they get the attention of the children. I



Doris & Alejandro Mesco

believe that this is what God wants for me in this new stage of our life.

As a result of Alejandro's decision to no longer be in full-time paid Christian ministry the church council has decided that his role as our mission partner has come to a natural conclusion (after 20 very special years), although we hope to keep in contact with him— in fact there is a good possibility that Alejandro & Doris will be visiting in May. They have been invited to a wedding in Alvechurch, Worcestershire.

He writes:

'What incredible things God allows! Then it is possible that I can visit you and hug you in person, and perhaps greet the church. I still do not know how it would be, but I would love to visit all my UK contacts. If this is God's plan, it will happen.'

We hope to find a replacement mission partner in due course, so that we might be in active partnership with those who are serving Christ around the world.

NEW FACES

We say hello to our newest members at St John's!



Peter Penberthy

After a childhood in Cornwall, I trained as a teacher. The most enjoyable part of my life involved travelling abroad, promoting and organising programmes for people of all ages and professions who wished to learn English in England. My responsibilities also included arranging tours and visits throughout the UK. Later, an interest in ICT led to working with the internet. Recently retired, I moved to Wilmslow where I have greatly appreciated the warm welcome and friendship of the community at St John's.



Jane Seymour

I've lived in Wilmslow for over 30 years with my husband Mark and family, Phil, Louise and Adam. We have recently moved to Congleton but I still work as the florist near St John's. I love anything remotely connected to theatre. I started cycling last year and thoroughly enjoy walking particularly with our dog Harvey.

My life has been enriched by the welcome I've received at St John's and also the Christianity Explored studies. Although I'm a latecomer to having faith and becoming a follower of Jesus Christ, I'm looking forward to many years of being involved at St Johns and my recent confirmation is an opportunity for me to strengthen my relationship with God.



Tony Tate

Originating in the North-East, and after qualifying as a Civil Engineer, I worked most of my life in Africa. My most enjoyable projects were surveying & building two major dams and irrigation schemes in the South Eastern area of the then Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. These dams enabled local people to develop essential agriculture for their local communities. Returning to the UK after 40 years' in Africa I worked with the Environment Agency before my retirement. Initially, my time in Meltham re-established my relationship with the church. Since moving to Wilmslow, to be closer to my family, my faith has been re-kindled by everyone at St Johns.

RECENT HISTORY

News and updates from the church



Bill Brown celebrating his 97th birthday in February



Derek Smith celebrated his 90th birthday recently!



On the 9th September 2017 Andrea Edgington and Charles Kesiro were married at St John's amid much rejoicing..For those of us who have seen Andrea grow up in this church, this was really a day to celebrate — even Simon was quite choked up! Andrea and Charles are expecting their first baby later this year, and we all very much look forward to meeting him or her.



The women's bible study group celebrated their Christmas lunch at Fr. Kennard's house, with all contributing to the bring and share.

HIGHLIGHTS

the St John's church family!



George Perrin and the Evergreens at a recent lunch



Friends International fundraiser - we were proud to raise over £3500 to support their mission to international students at the University of Manchester.



held
eddie
outing
lunch.



David Watts joined the question and answer panel for Science and Faith at Manchester Cathedral, alongside Peter Budd, Sue Kimber, and Roger Barlow.



A memorable morning! - Confirmation service, Sunday 18th February, with Bishop Keith Sinclair. L-R: Nigel, Mike, Eugene, Francesca, Charlotte and Jane with Bishop Keith after the service.

Nick Vaughan

Keswick Convention, Crosthwaite Campsite

We've been going to Keswick since 2009, camping at Crosthwaite, and always enjoyed the fellowship on the campsite fields. We soon realised that the camp doesn't just happen but is there because of the dedicated team of volunteers who organise it all. A couple of years ago we decided that we could go to Keswick for couple of weeks, one week to go to the convention and one to help run the camp, last year this became three weeks, including camp set up. It is great fun being part of the team and having a "badge of office" is a great excuse to wander around the campsite just chatting to anyone and everyone.

Sarai Russell

Holiday Club

The whole atmosphere of Holiday Club is amazing and I feel privileged to be part of it. It's hard work but I actually enjoy it! It's great to get to know the children and to see them having a good time while learning from the bible. I am always surprised at how much the kids learn and if they can remember it, or want to find out more that's even better!

Jean Emerson

Wilmslow Wells for Africa

In the UK we take for granted constant supplies of clean water. Wilmslow Wells for Africa's priority to bring clean water to some of the poorest communities in Africa. It was to help with that work that I joined the WWA Committee in about 2004. I was attracted to the charity because it was a local one and, because around 98% of the over £1 million that has been raised since the 1980s has gone to water projects. I enjoy being part of a team that is helping alleviate water problems in Africa. It is also encouraging to be working with people from other churches in Wilmslow, with so much help, and support, coming from people from St John's.

David Robinson

Local Citizens Advice

People coming into Citizens Advice come from all walks of life. Wilmslow may seem an affluent area but there are people suffering deprivation in both the richest and poorest streets in town. I find that working in a team of people all intent on helping clients solve their problems, regardless of age, race, religion, sex, disability, sexuality or nationality very rewarding. 17 years ago I was asked to become treasurer, which meant I legally had to become a trustee and give up my role as an adviser. I miss the client contact but I am still part of the local charity team.

Hazel Brooks

CHAOS

I volunteered to help lead and host CHAOS thinking that having two daughters in pre- and early teens years it would help me understand the questions, issues and world views our 14-18s are immersed in, and importantly help them understand what the Bible has to say on these matters. It's certainly helped me in having a better understanding of what the Bible does, or sometimes doesn't, say and challenged me in how to convey God's word without making it seem dull and boring to teens (work in progress!).

Ian Lawrence

Smallwood Manor Camp for 8-11s

I joined the team for the 2017 camp, organising games, doing bible studies, and generally supporting the rest of the leaders. Those doing the teaching came from a variety of backgrounds and it was a privilege to have the time (being retired) and the energy to join in. Over the few days of the camp friendships with fellow leaders developed and the children seemed to really enjoy themselves with some remarkably mature bible knowledge on display. By the end of the week everyone is exhausted but happy.

We chatted to the St John's church family about how they get involved with serving the church and the local community.

Nadine Morgan **St John's Music Group**

Why am I part of the Music Group? Simply because I love music and I love praising God. I think it is explained very well in the words of the Psalm ***"For God is King of all the earth, sing to Him a psalm of praise"*** - Psalm 47:7.

Ann Vaughan **The Message Trust**

I have been volunteering at The Message Trust for four years. I decided that I wanted to serve somewhere that was very different from privileged environment of Wilmslow and have been hugely blessed by being involved there. I work with people from every walk of life, from the company director to the ex-offender, to the young musician or the octogenarian who looks after reception once a month for prayer day. What they all have in common is a love for Jesus and a heart to serve the community. You can serve in lots of different ways, I have stuffed envelopes for mail drops, made up bags to give out to young people on the Higher Tour, stewarded at the Higher Tour, helped dress a room to sit 120 homeless and lonely people for Christmas lunch, hosted people at home for conferences and regularly worked on the database.

Gareth Hesslegrave **Scouts**

I got involved with Scouts in September 2016 after the previous leader (Ian Moffitt) announced his retirement. There was a risk of the troop closing, so I stepped in to help; selfishly I wanted to make sure there was a Scout troop for my sons to be part of when the time came. I enjoy the activities we organise for the Scouts – especially the hiking and camping – as well as being able to teach them some valuable skills which will undoubtedly help them in later life. There's always space for more leaders across, so if you are interested then please speak to me!

Dorothy Harding **Mums & Tots**

I joined Mums and Tots when I retired as I have always loved children and the babies and toddlers at Mums and Tots are a delight. Their mothers and nannies seem to get younger all the time and they are so organised. We get great pleasure seeing the new babies arrive and watching them grow. It's amazing how quickly they learn to spread glue! The atmosphere is most welcoming and friendly and I hope is a good Christian witness and outreach. Also in the team are Sarah Crispin, Anne Elliott and Lisa Glennister, ably supported by George Brown and Gareth Crispin.

Kate Howsley **Divorce Recovery Workshop**

St John's has hosted 16 Divorce Recovery Workshops over the past 9 years, supporting dozens of people from the north west going through the breakdown of a significant relationship. DRW helps with emotional recovery and it is open to people of any faith or none and any sort of relationship. We have social events after each workshop and we've had a number of bible study groups that have grown out of the workshops. It's group work, there are no experts, just peer support and it's wonderful to see pretty much everyone starting to feel a lot better from about session 4 (half way through). It's encouraging to know the church family prays for each workshop.

Ben Hollinshead **Who Let The Dads Out?**

We are all called to serve the church in one way or another, and it always gives me great pleasure in doing so. St John's is a family to me and serving others is a great way of building friendships and growing in Christ, and it doesn't matter what role you do we all play a part in serving God. Also, I can't get enough of the bacon butties!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the key messages coming out of last year's strategy review was the desire to build better relationships, both within the church family and beyond.

Relationships outside the church include the friendships we have individually (at the school gate, in the evening course at the Guild, with our neighbours and much more) but also our role as a church in serving our local community.

Our Vision statement begins: When people look at our church we want them to see a group of people that despite our faults are

- loving God
- loving each other
- loving the community we live in

and for this to be a reality we want to be making disciples of Jesus who are Growing in Christ, Serving in Love, Sharing the Gospel.

So a key component of loving our community is Serving in Love through loving our neighbours. Thus one of the specific actions in the strategy is



as follows: 'Recruit a volunteer to find out who is 'volunteering' or working in the community already and how we can better support them. Also to research local 'needs' and match with known interests with the church family.'

I'm delighted that Kate Howsley has agreed to take on this role for a trial period of 6 months. Nick Vaughan has already written a paper for the leadership team summarising the thoughts from the Review Groups and will work with Kate initially giving his thoughts and ideas as we look to develop how we serve our local community. As you see from this magazine there's a lot going on already, whether as individuals or teams within the church family. Do get in touch with Kate if you can help us serve our neighbours.

Simon Gales

BOOK REVIEW

Serving Without Sinking - John Hindley

Rotas. Churches couldn't run without them - in fact, most churches probably have a rota for organising the other rotas.

Hindley's book grapples helpfully with the questions of **why** we serve, as well as **who** we serve when we put our name down to make the coffee or to help at a summer holiday club. He faces up to the reality that serving can sometimes be hard work - it can feel thankless, tedious and joyless, when surely it should be the opposite? Hindley suggests this is an outworking of a wrong view of God (we serve to be good enough or to pay him back) or a wrong view of other people (to impress or belong) or even simply to

serve ourselves.

Jesus came to serve, not to be served. In fact, most of this book is about Jesus serving us and not the other way around! It is in response to Jesus' all-giving love that we serve as adopted children in the family business.

Hindley doesn't give trite or simple answers to the struggles we face. This is an encouraging and heartening book that helps us ask ourselves how we can better serve Christ and each other.

Duncan Howsley

Following the Servant King

In John 13, at the Last Supper, John records that Jesus, knowing that *"he had come from God and was returning to God...got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing and wrapped a towel round his waist"* (v3-4). He then began to wash the disciples feet.

Paul's words in Philippians 2:5-11 help us to see that what happens here is like an enacted parable, a visual aid that Jesus gives to his disciples:

Jesus *"did not consider equality with God something to be grasped but made himself nothing"* (Phil 2:6,7) - Jesus got up and took off his outer clothing;

"taking the very nature of a slave...he humbled himself" (Phil 2:7) - he wrapped a towel round his waist (adopting the clothing of a menial slave).

He *"became obedient to death, even death on a cross"* (Phil 2:8) – Why? In order that he might take our sin upon himself and die in our place, that we might be made clean, so he began to wash his disciples feet.

"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name" (Phil 2:9) - when he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. (Hebrews 1:3 - *"After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven"*).

In both John 13 and Philippians, Jesus' example is set before us for us to imitate:

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" John 13:14-15

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus"
Philippians 2:5

John wants us to understand why it is that Jesus was able to humble himself, both to wash the dirty feet of his disciples but

even more startlingly, to wash away our sin – he knew that he 'had come from God and was returning to God'.

He is our example, not that we can wash away sin of course - Jesus once for all sacrifice for sin is utterly unique - but as an example of giving ourselves to serve one another out of our love for Christ. In particular, we serve one another by ministering the grace, forgiveness and love of God to one another. This is not easy and does not come naturally to us, but the more we are aware of, and live consciously out of, the truth of being beloved children of our heavenly Father, the more conscious we are of belonging to him and that our eternal futures are secure in him, the more we too will be able to serve one another as he has loved and served us.



Mark Pickles is Director of Anglican Ministry Training at Oakhill Theological College and is Vicar of Moulton, near Northwich. He will be speaking at our Church Weekend at Home on the 21st & 22nd April.

To book your place for the St John's Weekend at Home, please fill out one of the forms at the back of church.

SPRING PROGRAMME

Sundays	10am Lord's Supper on third Sunday	6.30pm Lord's Supper on third Sunday	Homegroups
Apr 8	Resurrection Importance 1 Cor 15:12-34	Acts: Turning the World the Right Way Up Will things be different? Y&N! Acts 1:1-26	Meeting in various homes, on Thursdays & Fridays, afternoons and evenings, to study God's work and encourage one another.
Apr 15	Resurrection Result 1 Cor 15:35-58	It's all about Jesus! Acts 2:1-41	AMOS: THE DAY OF THE LION
Apr 22	Church Weekend at Home	Church Weekend at Home	April 12 Calling the Nations to Account Amos 1, 2
Apr 29	APCM	God's New Community Acts 2:42-47	April 26 If God is Against Us Amos 3
May 6	1 John: From Head to Heart The Heart of the Matter 1 John 1:1-4	Apostles behaving bravely Acts 3:1 - 4:22	May 10 Prepare to Meet your God Amos 4
May 13	Parade Service Walking in the Light 1 John 1:5-10	Facing Opposition Acts 4:23-37	May 24 Stop Playing at Meetings Amos 5
May 20	The Real Thing 1 John 2:1-6	Handling Hypocrisy Acts 5:1-11	June 7 Stop Being Complacent Verse
May 27	How the true light shines 1 John 2:7-17	Handling Hostility Acts 5:12-42	June 21 Seeing it as it is Amos 7
Jun 3	Stay the course 1 John 2:18-27	So the Word of God spread Acts 6:1-7	July 5 A famine of the Word of God Amos 8
Jun 10	Family Likeness 1 John 2:28 - 3:10	Something worth dying for Acts 6:8 - 7:60	July 19 In Anger Remembering Mercy Amos 9
Jun 17	A future that is real 1 John 3:11-24	The Unstoppable King Acts 8:1-25	PRAYER BREAKFASTS Apr 7, May 5, June 2, July 7 Saturdays, 8.30-9.45am Church Rooms
Jun 24	Testing the Spirits 1 John 4:1-6	Expansion to Samaria Acts 8:26-40	
Jul 1	Does God really love us? 1 John 4:7-12	A Missionary is Born Acts 9:1-31	
Jul 8	True Confidence 1 John 4:13-20	God's Explosive Purpose Acts 10:1 - 11:18	
Jul 15	Faith & Endurance 1 John 5:1-21	The church that changed the world Acts 11:19-30	
Jul 22	1 John - All Age Roundup	The hidden hand at work Acts 12:1-25	

Special Events

Apr 28 Who Let The Dads Out?
Church Rooms, 10am - 11.30am

May 12 Northern Men's Convention
Holy Trinity Platt, Manchester

May 13 Evergreens Lunch
Church Rooms, 12.15pm

May 19 Men's Breakfast
Alderley Edge Golf Club, 8.15am

May 20 Simply Lunch
A home near you!

June 2 Big Church Day Out
Capesthorpe Hall

June 9 Equipped! Conference
All Saints Preston

June 14 World Cup Sports Quiz
Alderley Edge Golf Club, 7.30pm

June 17 Evergreens Lunch
Church Rooms, 12.15pm

June 24 Big Screen Family Friendly
World Cup: England v Panama
Church Rooms, 12.30pm