

February 17th St Johns 9am and Christ the King 10.30 am.

Sermon series Why do we come to church .

May I speak from the heart and may the holy spirit guide me Amen .

Today's theme is Why do we come to church ?

Simple question ? ,but not as easy to answer , is it for the coffee ? Is it for the hymn's ? is it for my friends I call my church family ? is it to be useful to set up church and put it away again each week ? or is it to feel I belong to a church ?

Well maybe ,but the reason I come to church is to praise God for the things he does for me ,hear the words from the bible, and to confess my sins to him, and to feel the love of God ,as I know Jesus loves me and he will never leave me .

I can leave all my troubles in his hands and he will choose the best path for me to take .

I do not come because it is out of habit ,or

because its a way to do something on a sunday morning other than going out for breakfast or to the shops .

Yes I love the way we turn this section of the school hall into a into a place of worship, but I also like to see what the school has been doing by reading their posters and looking at their pictures, and each week I supress the urge to climb the wall bars ,as I dont think my breathing would allow it .

But then I stop and think what it must of been like ,to have followed Jesus, all those years ago .

For Jesus didnt have an alter or a lectern to preach from , he didnt have the comfort of a chair to sit on ,all Jesus had was a beach by the side of a lake or a mountain side , but the people still flocked to hear him teach them, by preaching his message of love , also he broke bread from out of a basket and with the fishes he fed them all .

So all these things we have here in this church today around us ,are reminders that we are in his prescence and also of that very first act of

communion in an upper room, where Jesus took the bread and cup of wine gave thanks over it and as he shared it out, asked to be remembered in this breaking of the bread ,which is his body broken for you and in drinking the cup of wine which is his blood shed for you .

But do we put more importance on the things around us, the trappings of worship , rather than on the message that Jesus teaches us all about in the bible on how we should conduct our daily lives ?

So for myself although it's nice to come into this worship space, I think I could worship Jesus almost anywhere , and hope fully more so with people who are searching for something that is missing in their lives and are seeking to fill this emptiness ,by simply just sharing what Jesus has done for myself over the years of my life .

I could encourage them to attend something like messy church or tuesday cafe or join in with the book club ,depending on the age and interests of the person I am talking to .

After all church doesn't always look like this worship space here , church can be where ever God has called us to be . The people in Phoenix house for example, enjoy their church on a sunday evening ,which if you not been to a service there is conducted in a small art room, with a simple table and a small cross and candle .but to them this is their church .

What I have learn't over the years is that Church really is us ,the people, as its the coming together to give him thanks and praise and that can be done anywhere or in all ways, at all times .

I didn't always feel like this ,the only reason I came to church was that Denise my wife invited me to attend ,so I wasn't going to church for any other reason than that ,but it was so strange everyone seemed to know what was going on except me ,so it was very intimidating ,I was concertrating so much on standing up and sitting down in the right places I hadnt really got it .

After a while I knew where to stand up and sit down and finally got to start hearing the

readings and the bible message .

I started to help out in church ,and found I was really enjoying it ,getting to know people more, joining in with bible studies and lent groups, even sharing my thought's, I realised that I too could have a voice, for he was my God as well as their God .

Not long ago the reverend Beverly Watson who was our Vicar at that time ,asked myself to be a reader , I said NO at first ,but she said that I could do it with Denise ,so I said yes, then I had persuaded Denise to come along with me .

The only worry I had ,was could I do it, mainly because although I have a strong faith and belief in Jesus, I would not say that people would see me as deeply religious .

I could not see myself standing up in front of a congregation preaching ,but here I am today .

I do think though that we need to get back to basics ,and fix our ideas on the love Jesus taught us about and that is love thy neighbour as myself ,shelter the homeless and feed the starving , look our for the broken and addicts

amongst us and remember that Jesus loves them as much as he loves us .The hardest thing to do is to open up ourselves to people, and share what we believe and show people who we really are and how Jesus helps us in our daily lives .

Do I need a church building to do this in ? not necessarily ,as when I talk to people I am reminded that Jesus said" when two or three are gathered in my name ,I am amongst you" . so his church is where ever I happen to be at that moment in time .

The church is never about the bricks and mortar ,it is always greater than that . Its about a way of being in the world .Jesus himself gives to each one of us direct access to his divinity , we can reach him directly ,we do not need the priest to be an intercessor for us , we can simply just talk to him ,that is all Jesus want us to do ,is to acknowledge him at all times, in all places , and in all situations .

Church is discribed as a building used for public christian worship ,where we share fellowship and humbly seek God .It is also

open for everyone who is looking for something in their lives that makes them feel empty like something is missing, regardless of their status .

Church is about sharing a bond with other christians no matter what the difference's we may have, as each sunday we stir up the spirit in each other, by sharing in singing hymns, and sharing in the prayers for the world ,the local community, also prayers of healing for the sick and praying for the dead .

We share in the communion to show that we are all one body and are also doing this in remembrance of Jesus, just as he asked us too.

Church provides us with a spiritual food that enables us to go out into the world and face the week ahead and strive to be a good christian, by putting the words we have heard in church either through the words in the bible, or a sermon preached, into action . It makes myself examine my thoughts and actions throughout the week , it keeps me on my toes ,it makes me aware of the world around

me, the needs and wants of people world wide, but also of the beauty that has been created by God's own hand for my pleasure .

So what we want to know is your thought's are on, why you come to church ,so we have wrote out a few questions for to to write your answer's in whether they be good or bad ,we just want honest opinions, these are to be done anonmously and its all to help us to move forward in our growth thank you.

Amen .