



St Philip's Come & See

Sunday 15 January 2017

Second Sunday After Epiphany

Dear Friends

Communication is a major feature of modern life. We can so easily keep in touch with family and friends all over the world. Social media is a wonderful means by which we can share our thoughts, our news, our joys and sorrows in text, photos, video and voice. As many of you would know we have had some issues in recent times with our communications here at St Philip's and it is astonishing how much we rely on it and how much we miss it when it fails to work! At the end of this note are my contact details, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need to speak with me. We use a variety of methods of communication here at St Philip's through our Website and Facebook page they are great means by which we can ensure that our worship and ministry here is known as far and as wide as possible. However our digital mediums can never replace the face to face contact that is crucial to our ministry and which is indeed at the very heart of our faith in God incarnate.

In today's gospel we hear Jesus speak those words that have become our motto and the rationale behind our ministry 'Come and See.' They were words which our Patron St Philip then adopted as he encouraged Nathanael into the fold. As I am sure you can imagine many people speak to me about church attendance. Because I tend to wander around with my clerical collar on I am a bit of a target! 'You don't have to go to church to be a good person' 'I say my prayers on the golf course' 'I can have my faith in God and not attend Church.' Just a few of the responses I hear! The fact is that the scriptures know nothing of solitary faith, unless it is enforced by prison in the case of Paul (and Peter). Our Christian faith is based on community, but one of the trends we are seeing today is 'believing not belonging.' Never before has Christ's (and in turn Philip's) invitation been so important.

I rather liken our ways to those of a Cricket Test match, it takes time, the result is not always immediate, sometimes there is no result, it requires patient perseverance, it requires individual effort but always within the context of the team. The problem is we live in a 20/20 Big Bash world! It needs to be immediate, over in a flash, it's entertaining, there is always a result.

We come to Church not just for the 'event' and we say to others 'Come and see' not be entertained, amused for an hour or so, we come to experience proper communion with each other and with God, not the superficiality and immediacy of digital communication. I guess really the only reason we come to church is to be sent from it.

Martin

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