

Dear friends

What does love look like? We can probably identify when we see someone acting in a loving way, or we can see some people 'in love'. We might suggest that a red heart represents love, but actually saying what love looks like is more complicated.

If we think of love as an emotion then it is really difficult to describe as emotions don't have a shape or form. But the love we think of when it comes to God is not an emotion or a feeling. It's an action. And it's even more than that: the Bible says that God is love. Love is the true essence of God.

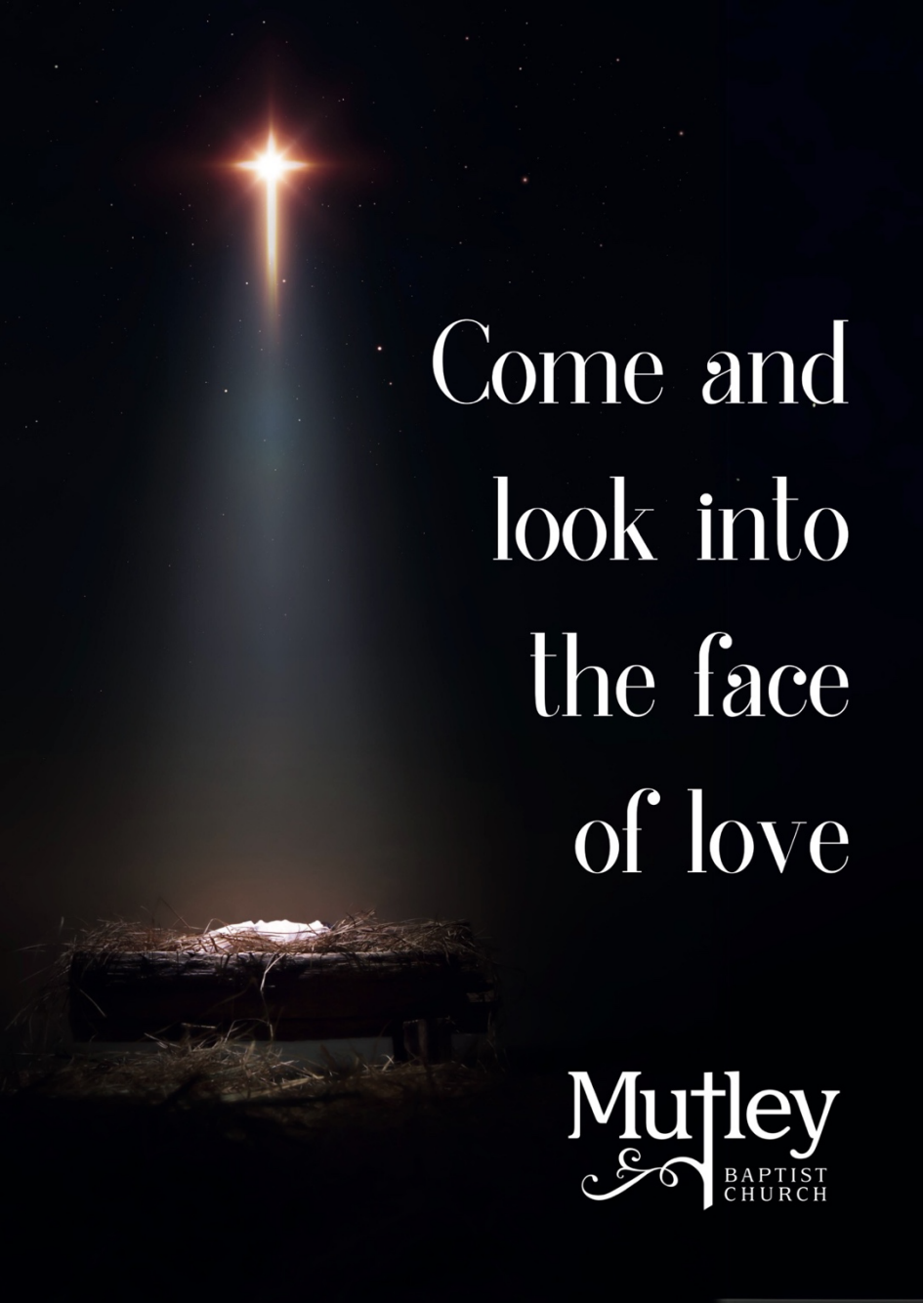
And in Jesus God has made that love knowable. Our Christmas publicity (on the next page) this year includes the invitation to 'Come and look into the face of love.' In the face of a child born in squalid circumstances in a tiny village in an occupied country we see what love looks like. Love looks like Jesus.

We discover that truth in one of the most amazing names given to describe Jesus – 'Immanuel', which means 'God with us'. God came into the world to show us what love looks like, to be with us and enable people to experience that love. We can still experience that love through faith in Jesus: by his Spirit, as we read the Bible and pray, and through his people – us, the church.

My prayer for all of us this Christmas is that everyone connected with this church in some way will see and experience God's love afresh in and through us. Do take invitation cards to share with your friends and family and bring them along to some of our events.

Be blessed, be a blessing

Nick



Come and
look into
the face
of love

Mutley
BAPTIST
CHURCH



HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Christmas Services

Dec 15th – 10am **All Age Nativity**; 6pm **Alternative Carols**

Dec 16th – 7pm **Carol Singing** in Freedom Fields estate

Dec 19th – 7.30pm **Blue Christmas** (if you find this time of year difficult)

Dec 22nd – 6pm **Carols by Candlelight**

Dec 25th – 10am **Christmas Day Celebration**

Journeying through Advent

A free **25-day devotional Advent journey** is available from London Institute for Contemporary Christianity to help you reflect on our 'down to earth' Saviour – Jesus who stepped into the mess and detail of life on Earth, and calls us to do the same.

If you follow this series through Advent, starting on 1 December, you'll explore four different themes through Bible reflections. You can sign up to receive the journey now, and the first prompts will become available on 1 December.

Join the free devotional journey either through the YouVersion Bible app on your phone by searching 'LICC Down to Earth' or via emails from LICC, by signing up at licc.org.uk/downtoearth



Thank you for our new fridge!

Thank you to FareShare Southwest, who put our name forward for a £200 voucher sponsored by Arla foods to buy another fridge to help increase the number of people benefitting from the food we buy from by FareShare. The fridge arrived last month and is being put to full use storing fresh produce.



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

The MacMillan Coffee morning at Cosy Corner in October raised a magnificent £150! Well done to all who organised it and thank you to all who came and donated (and selflessly ate the cakes in support of this excellent cause).

A HUUUGE 'Thank you'

In their accounts of Jesus' life his biographers tell us that he took five small loaves of bread and two fish and, having given God thanks for them, fed a vast crowd of over 5,000 people with them. It seems incredible, doesn't it?

God is doing a similar miracle today - taking the money that you donate and transforming it so that people are fed and clothed, so that children, young people families have a place to come and enjoy themselves, so that people can grow in their faith in Jesus, and so much more. We want to say 'thank you' to you for the financial gifts that you have given to the church this year as an act of worship to God. **Your giving has enabled us to:**

Provide about **100 Sunday services** (including on Zoom in the mornings).

Baptise 6 people. Run **Being With** and **User's Guide to the Bible** courses.

Serve over **2,000 hot meals** and **900 subsidised bags of food** at Bigger Table on Thursday lunchtimes. Over **1000 cups of tea and coffee** (plus cakes!) were served at Cosy Corner on Tuesdays

Give out over **4,200 hot drinks and food** to homeless people through Soup Run on Wednesday evenings

Provide at least **4,700 places for children and families** to come and enjoy our facilities at Buzzy Bees and Baby Bees on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays

Cook over **1,100 meals** for families at Lighthouse Café, provide **810 places** at **Supernova and Mutley Youth** on Thursday evenings and run a **Holiday Club** during the summer attended by **38 children**

Ensure that the church **buildings are well-maintained** and improved and **hire out or provide rooms** for Plymouth Focus, Gifted Women, 2 choirs, Plymouth Birders, Old Plymouth and Plymouth Egyptology Society, as well as many others on a less regular basis

Directly **support overseas and UK mission** with grants

All of this, and so much more, has only been possible because of your generous gifts and support this year. Thank you so much.

Sunday Services

In our morning and evening services we're entering the season of Advent and Christmas with plenty of special services (see below)

You can listen to most Sunday morning sermons on the Sunday Services section of the website: www.mutleybaptist.co.uk/services - scroll down and there's a player where you can listen or download sermons.

These themes will be picked up and explored more deeply in most **Home Groups** each week. Pick up a leaflet from the entrance area of the church to find out about joining a group.

Mutley Baptist Church online

Our Sunday morning services are usually (subject to the vagaries of internet connections) available on Zoom. You can either click on the link (if you have a PDF version of Mutley Matters) or use the login details below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82895962650...>

Meeting ID: **828 9596 2650** Passcode: **155595**

As well as streaming our services on zoom, you can find out a lot more about us including our beliefs, vision and values as a church and our activities on our website www.mutleybaptist.co.uk You can follow links on the *What's On* page to book for our youth, children and families activities. We have Facebook and Instagram pages about other activity in the life of the church. Please find, like and follow us for up-to-date news.



For your prayers

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18

Our December mission prayer focus is on our youth, children and families work, led by Beth and supported by a great team including Kelly and Jane (providing admin support).

You can read about this on the mission board that is to the left of the main doors as you leave the entrance area. To the left of that board (next to the toilets) is a board that tells us more about our six values and includes copies of our daily prayers based on those values.

As well as thanking God for those who are already part of this church, we are delighted to welcome new friends to this church. If that's you, then may you know and experience God's love, joy and peace and we pray that you will find a spiritual home here. Do please ask if you want to know anything about us.

Let's remember to thank God too for answered prayer and the many blessings we receive personally and as a church – and share those encouragements!

During the Christmas season let's remember and pray for those who find this time of year difficult due to illness, loneliness, bereavement or simply because the tinsel and lights are overwhelming. Pray for God's presence to be a comfort to them. Our 'Blue Christmas' service on 19th December may be what they need).

In the Mutley Matters time in our Sunday morning service we hear of a range of prayer requests and thanks from across the church. If you would like to be a part of that but would rather not speak out loud, let Nick know by email or send him a note and he will include your prayers too.



General information

Address: Mutley Plain, Mutley, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 6LB (01752) 203346

office@mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk (10am to 5pm Tues - Thur)

Rev Nick Lear (Minister) - nicklear@mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk 07869 809064 (not Saturday)

Beth Hemes (Children's Families' and Youth pastor) - beth@mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk

Fiona Spicer (Community pastor) - fiona@mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk

Sunday Services in the Sanctuary

10am and 6 o'clock (a more informal style of service)

Home Groups (term time)

Hartley and Zoom	Tuesdays	Joy Sutton
Plympton	Tuesdays	Malcolm Wells
Woolwell	Tuesdays	Paddy and Karen Allen
Eggbuckland	Wednesdays	Jill Heaton
Mutley	Wednesdays	Fiona & John Spicer
Stoke	Wednesdays	Kate & Steve Brown

Contact Joy Sutton, or the church office for more details, or pick up a card.

Youth children and families groups (term time)

contact Jane Frost or Kelly Thomas - yfadmin@mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk and book online on our website

Buzzy Bees Messy Mondays - Monday mornings

Buzzy Bees Stay and Play—Wednesday mornings

Baby Bees— Friday afternoons

Lighthouse Café and Supernova Thursday evenings

MY1 and MY2—Thursday evenings

Mutley Youth, Kids' church and Creche—Sunday mornings

Cosy Corner Tuesdays from 12-2pm in the Lounge (Closed in School Holidays)

Bigger Table Thursdays 12noon—1pm in the Hall meal and bags of food (£1.50 each)

Wednesday Prayer 10am in Nick's office for about ½ hour.

Mission Prayer usually 1st Monday each month in the Lounge at 7.30pm.

Pastoral team Wednesdays 11am - nicklear@mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk

Please send any items for inclusion in the next edition of Mutley Matters to Nick by 24th of the preceding month. There's always up to date information on our Facebook & Instagram pages and the 'What's on?' section of our website: www.mutleybaptistchurch.co.uk