

**KEY VERSE:**

*So don't worry, because I am with you. Don't be afraid,  
because I am your God. Isaiah 41:10*

IMMANUEL  
GOD WITH US



**THE PARISH OF CHALFONT ST PETER**  
Encounter God, Encourage Others, Engage our World  
Charity Number: 1146043



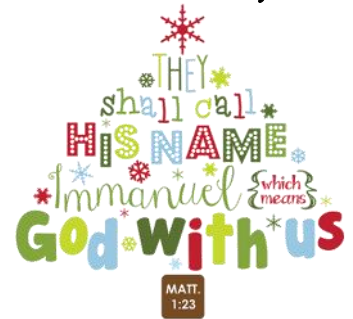
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# FOUNDATION CAFÉ SERVICE

20th November, 2016

**What's In  
A Name?**

**Immanuel**



**CHALFONT  
ST. PETER  
PARISH CHURCHES**

## KNOW WHAT:

- Today is the last in our series on the names of God in the Old Testament. We have learnt about God being our Healer, our Provider, our Shepherd, our Banner and our Peace. This week we are looking at God being called 'With Us'.
- The Old Testament is the first part of the Bible which tells stories about God and his people before Jesus was born.
- Isaiah was a man who lived hundreds of years before Jesus was born. God revealed to Isaiah his plan for God to be with us through Jesus.
- Isaiah wrote the plan down, it can be found in a book called Isaiah in the middle of the Bible.
- It tells us how Jesus will be born and that his name will be 'Immanuel', which means 'God is with us'.

## SO WHAT:

- God being 'with us' is monumental news! God isn't some remote divine being which shows no interest in us, He is with us every step of our lives.
- God being with us transforms who we are and what we do, we can ask God's advice because He has been with us all through our life, and will continue to be with us forever.

## NOW WHAT:

- Remember God is with you in everything you do this week.
- Let us be aware of God's presence with us by listening to Him, praying, and seeing Him at work in our lives.

## BEN'S BLOG:

It seems to start earlier every year. After watching the fireworks in Gerrard's Cross we decided to purchase some sparklers from Tesco and on November 5<sup>th</sup>, many employees of Tesco had been asked to work late to erect the huge Christmas tree in the foyer. Now our television screens show us the advertisements from each of the High Street shops. Most famously the John Lewis advert seems to get a huge amount of coverage. For some, it's the sign that Christmas is coming, for others, it leaves us wondering 'how many millions of pounds did John Lewis spend to come up with an advertisement that is essentially a dog on a trampoline'.

I think as Christians today we have massively under-estimated the significance of God being 'with us'. When the prophet Isaiah announced that 'he shall be called Immanuel' – which means God with us, it was the best news imaginable. If you look back in the Old Testament you will see the extreme rituals that God's people had to endure to enter into God's presence. Moses set up a Tabernacle, which was a tent, a place to meet with God. Whilst he knew God is everywhere, the Tabernacle reminded God's people He was with them. But Moses and others could go to the Tabernacle to commune with God only after they'd gone through ritual washing and cleansing and confessions. And even then, the place of meeting was only for the super-holy, squeaky clean. Years later, when the temple was set up, the Holy of Holies was the new place to meet with God. But again, this holy place was behind a thick veil, inaccessible for all but the High Priest, and even then it was a once-a-year visit. The High Priest was allowed to enter into that Holy place to be with God but they did so with a rope tied around their waist for if they were to die, other priests could pull them out without having to enter the Holy of Holies.

The crescendo and culmination of the Traditional Nine Lessons and Carols (which you may want to come to on 18<sup>th</sup> December) is the reading of the start of John's Gospel, where we hear that in Christ, God made His Tabernacle amongst us. What wonderful news it is to know that God is with us. God no longer only meets with the squeaky clean, but with all of us. He is with us at all times, and with us forever.