



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

ADVENT 3
14 December 2014

A warm welcome to our services today.

At the 9.30 am Eucharist Fr George celebrates and preaches and Valerie Alvarez leads the intercessions.

Hymns: 444, 235, 308 (i) and 34

Setting: Oldroyd

Tea and coffee will be served in church after the 9.30 service and there will be a Bring-&-Buy Sale (in aid of Christingle) – please stay on.

(The Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church 1.00 – 5.00pm)

Service for The Compassionate Friends and Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide at 6 pm.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Parish of Datchworth in our Diocese.
The Diocese of Kitgum (Uganda) Benjamin Ojwang its Bishop and all its people.
The work of Us with Iraqi Christians.

The World: All those experiencing hunger in our country.
People who are vulnerable to bad weather conditions.
All people living under the threat of extremist violence.

The Community and Parish: The schools of our parish, their staff, students and families.
The Chase Care Centre.
People who will be homeless over Christmas.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Bruce Alexander, Tina Bennett, Janet Bridge, Jean and Robert Caton, Peter Coley, Marion Craddock-Jones, Pamela Cutler, Audrey Dixon, Sandra Fullerton, Jenny Houghton, Audrey Jaquest, Mary Kearns, Lesley Kinch, Loretta Lynch, Audrey Morgan, Dorcas Ochola, Brian O’Riordan, Helen Perry, Mark Pritchard, Christina Simon, Mark Simon, Karen Stride, Anne Wightman and Daniel Williamson (age 3).

The Departed:

Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 61.1–4, 8–11

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The servant of the LORD said:

- ¹ The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
- ² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;
- ³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
- ⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.
- ⁸ For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
- ⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
- ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

SECOND READING I Thessalonians 5.16–24

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

- My brothers and sisters,
16 Rejoice always,
17 pray without ceasing,
18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
19 Do not quench the Spirit.
20 Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything;
21 hold fast to what is good;
22 abstain from every form of evil.
23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

GOSPEL John 1.6–8, 19–28

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.
8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.
19 This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’
20 He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, ‘I am not the Messiah.’
21 And they asked him, ‘What then? Are you Elijah?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ ‘Are you the prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’
22 Then they said to him, ‘Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?’
23 He said, ‘I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of the Lord,”’ as the prophet Isaiah said.
24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.
25 They asked him, ‘Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?’
26 John answered them, ‘I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know,
27 the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.’
28 This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

THIS WEEK

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| Mon | 15 | Dec | Chater Infants School Christmas Celebration Toddlers' Group | 9.15am 10 – 11.30am |
| Tue | 16 | Dec | Watford Grammar School for Boys Carol Service (Church in use during day for rehearsals) | 7.30pm |
| Wed | 17 | Dec | Coffee in Church and Food Bank | 10.30 - 12 noon |
| Thu | 18 | Dec | Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language) Followed by coffee morning in the Choir Vestry Choir Practice | 10.00am 7.00 – 8.30pm |
| Fri | 19 | Dec | Laurance Haines School Christmas Service | 1.45pm |
| Sun | 21 | Dec | ADVENT 4 Holy Communion (Pres: Fr Geoff) SUNG EUCHARIST (President and Preacher: Fr Geoff) Messy Church Christingle Service (Rehearsal for Carol Service) | 8.00am 9.30am 11.15am 11.45am afternoon) |
| Service of Carols and Readings (followed by refreshments) | | | | 6.00pm |

NOTICES

FINAL COPY DATE for Christmas and New Year Sword is next Sunday 21 December. Hard copy or floppy disc to Rob White or email to robwhite.watford@tiscali.co.uk

THE BRING-&BUY SALE last Sunday raised \$41 – many thanks.

ANGEL TREE: Gift tags for presents to be brought to the Crib Service are on the angel tree which is at the west end of the church.

FOOD BANK: Don't forget that we are still collecting food as well as acting as a distribution centre. There is a list at the back of church of the items of food that can be included in the parcels. If you would like to donate any of these items please bring them to church and put them in the box at the west end.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Christingle Service: 21 December at 11.45 am

Christmas Eve: Crib Service at 4.00 pm;

Midnight Mass at 11.30 pm

Christmas Day: Christmas Morning Communion at 9.30 am

Sunday 28 December: Carols round the Crib at 9.30 am

Saturday 24th January: Parish Awayday for planning, with John Kiddle, Diocesan Mission Advisor. Please put the date in your diary.