



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**ADVENT 3**  
**17 December 2017**

A warm welcome to our services today.

At the 9.30 am Eucharist Fr Geoff celebrates and preaches. Paul Chandler leads the intercessions.

**Hymns: 96, leaflet, 34 and 558**

**Setting: Thorne**

Children's Church in Littlebury Hall.

Refreshments will be served in church after the 9.30 service – please stay on.

Holy Baptism at 12 noon.

Christmas Carol Service at 6.00pm – followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

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## **For your prayers this week:**

**The Church:** The Parish of North Myms in our Diocese.  
The Diocese of Wyoming (USA), John Smylie its Bishop and all its people.  
The USPG-supported Bollobphur Hospital in Bangladesh.

**The World:** People with mental health issues.  
The work of Christian Aid over Christmas.  
People who will be homeless over Christmas.

**The Community and Parish:** Chater Infants School.

All our visitors over Christmas.  
The work of Street Angels in Watford over Christmas.

**The Ill and the Housebound:** Especially Christopher Bilson, Janet Bridge, Peter Coley, Marion Craddock-Jones, Kate Dickinson, Audrey Dixon, Sister Dominic, Claire Dunning, Jemima Hill, Peter Hinchey, Blossom Hutchinson, Kristine Jenkins, Mary Kearns, Lesley Kinch, Loretta Lynch, Dorcas Ochola, Brian O'Riordan, Michele Rodford, Rick Sear, Christina Simon, Mark Simon, Peter White; and all who care for them.

**The Departed:**

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**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:

- <sup>1</sup> 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;
- <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;
- <sup>3</sup> 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.
- <sup>4</sup> 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.
- <sup>8</sup> 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.
- <sup>9</sup> 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.
- <sup>10</sup> 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.
- <sup>11</sup> 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**

Mon	18	Dec	Chater School Christmas Songs	9.00am
			Toddlers' Group	10 – 11.30am
Wed	20	Dec	Food Bank	10.00am – 12 noon
			Coffee in Church	10.30am – 12 noon
Thur	21	Dec	Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language)	10.00am
Sun	24	Dec	<b><u>ADVENT 4</u></b>	
			Holy Communion	8.00am
			<b>SUNG EUCHARIST</b> (President and Preacher: Fr Geoff)	<b>9.30am</b>
			Children's Church in Littlebury Hall	
			Crib Service	4.00pm
			<b>MIDNIGHT MASS</b>	<b>11.30pm</b>

## **NOTICES**

**ST MICHAEL'S CAROL SERVICE:** This will be at 6 pm tonight, Sunday, 17 December. Refreshments will be served after the Service for which donations of mince pies will be gratefully received.

**THE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS BOOKLETS** are ready. Please pick up your copy.

**BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY COURSE:** Saturday 17th February 2018, 9.30 - 3.30 pm at St Luke's, Langley Way, Watford.

To book: [www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/find-a-course](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/find-a-course). Closing date 9 February.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **Christmas Day**

8 am                    Holy Communion

9.30 am                Sung Eucharist

30 December at 7.30pm – Concert given by Watford Youth Sinfonia.

6 January 2018 at 10.00am - Christingle Workshop

7 January 2018 at 2.00pm – Christingle Service – preceded at 12.30pm with a Bring and Share Lunch. This is a shared event with the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church.