



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

MOTHERING SUNDAY

22 March 2020

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have announced the suspension of public worship in all Churches.

This means that there will be no more public worship at St Michael's until further notice.

We are encouraged however, to make the Church available for private prayer, so my present intention is to make the Church open at all times when it would otherwise normally be open.

We are encouraged to make use of broadcast and live-streamed acts of worship.

We will also be trying to keep in touch with everyone, and give support where we can.

Best Wishes, Fr Geoff.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: All Church leaders guiding people through unprecedented times.
Church support for people in self-isolation.

All Christians who are anxious or perplexed.

The World: All efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19.

The preservation of family and community life in new ways.

All health service workers.

All whose employment and livelihoods are under threat.

The Community and Parish: All our over 70, high risk, and self-isolating congregation members.

New ways to be found to express our life together as a Church Family.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Christopher Bilson, Janet Chandler, Marion Craddock-Jones, Audrey Dixon, Cynthia Dixon, Claire Dunning, Fr Robert Featherstone, Jemima Hill, Peter Hinchey, Mary Kearns, Keith Levinson, Loretta Lynch, Craig McKay, Lisa Mills, Sylvia Obeng, Dorcas Ochola, Brian Rees, Michelle Rodford, Christina Simon, Adelaide Tonkin, Peter White; and all who care for them.

The Departed: Barry Eccleshall (Tim Eccleshall's father)

Collect

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself:

strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Exodus 2.1–10

A reading from the book of Exodus.

- ¹ A man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman.
- ² The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months.
- ³ When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river.
- ⁴ His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.
- ⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it.
- ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said.
- ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?'
- ⁸ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother.
- ⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it.
- ¹⁰ When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because,' she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

SECOND READING Colossians 3.12–17

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

- ¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.
- ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.
- ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
- ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.
- ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.
- ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

GOSPEL John 19.25b–27

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

- ²⁵ Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
- ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.'
- ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

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We are asked to put a lighted candle in our window at 7.00pm on Sunday 22nd, and Sundays following, as part of the National Call to Prayer

THIS WEEK

Mon	23	Mar	Toddlers' Church NO Lent Groups	10 – 11.30am
Wed	25	Mar	Church open for Private Prayer and Food Bank	10.00am – 12 noon
Thu	26	Mar	Church open for Private Prayer	10.00am – 11.00am
Sun	29	Mar	<u>LENT 5</u> Church open for Private Prayer	9.30am – 11.00am

Dear Friends,

Happy Mothering Sunday! Few of us have ever seen a Mothering Sunday like this one. The coronavirus outbreak is making us a fearful people, fearful for our health and that of our loved ones, fearful for our jobs, fearful for our supply of food and other essentials. I am not going to say that there is no reason for anxiety, that would be simply foolish. What we must beware of though, is the negative effect of fear that turns people against each other. The Bible tells us that the antidote for fear is love – “perfect love casts out all fear”. We just need to learn how to love each other and do social distancing at the same time!

Love and prayers,

Fr Geoff

NOTICES

ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION: This year's revision commenced on Sunday 1st March and finishes on 1st April. A copy of the current Roll is on the notice board at the back of the Church for you to check. If anyone would like their name added to the Roll, please get a form from Fr Geoff or Simon Fowle. If you have changed your email address or telephone number could you also inform us by email at simon.fowle@ntlworld.com or phone on 01923 229624 please.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEW HOPE: The special service at St Mary's Church to celebrate this on Monday 23rd March has unfortunately been postponed.

APRIL SWORD has been cancelled.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Saturday, 28 March. Concert by Audentior Symphony Orchestra. – CANCELLED.

Tuesday, 31 March. Agape meal - CANCELLED.