



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**EASTER 3**

**Sunday 26 April 2020**

**“The Church building is closed, but the Church family continues”**

As you are now all aware, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have announced the suspension of public worship in all Churches. The Government has also announced that all Places of Worship must close.

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

There is a message from Fr Geoff on the back page.

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

NHS staff, and patients in hospital and in the community  
Residents and staff in care homes, and carers for people at home  
People involved in food delivery and retail  
Paramedics and ambulance staff  
Police, fire and all emergency services  
People shielding and self-isolating  
Businesses facing bankruptcy and their owners and employees  
Funeral Directors and Cemetery and Crematorium staff  
Borough and County Councils trying to maintain essential services

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

**The Departed:** Michelle Rodford.

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**Collect**

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord:

give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; 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 ACTS 2.14a, 36–41**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

On the day of Pentecost,

<sup>14</sup> Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd,

<sup>36</sup> 'Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.'

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?'

<sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.'

<sup>40</sup> And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.'

<sup>41</sup> So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added to their number.

**SECOND READING I Peter 1.17–23**

A reading from the first letter of Peter.

<sup>17</sup> If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile.

<sup>18</sup> You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold,

<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish.

<sup>20</sup> He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake.

<sup>21</sup> Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

<sup>22</sup> Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart.

<sup>23</sup> You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

## GOSPEL Luke 24.13–35

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

- <sup>13</sup> On that same day, two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,
- <sup>14</sup> and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.
- <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them,
- <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.
- <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, ‘What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?’ They stood still, looking sad.
- <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, ‘Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?’
- <sup>19</sup> Jesus asked them, ‘What things?’ They replied, ‘The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,
- <sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.
- <sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.
- <sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,
- <sup>23</sup> and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.
- <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Jesus.’
- <sup>25</sup> Then he said to them, ‘Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!
- <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?’
- <sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.
- <sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.
- <sup>29</sup> But they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’ So he went in to stay with them.
- <sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
- <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus; and he vanished from their sight.
- <sup>32</sup> They said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?’
- <sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.
- <sup>34</sup> They were saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!’
- <sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Dear Friends,

The early Church met in people's homes. This is reflected in the New Testament letters, in historical references to house churches, and in archaeological discoveries. The house Church discovered at Lullingstone Roman Villa in Kent is renowned. It was a bit different then though, as they could meet in groups in each other's houses. On the other hand, they didn't have telephone or internet! What they did is write letters, some of which are preserved for us. Communication is key to being Church during the lockdown, using the means at our disposal to share God's love through our care for each other.

Stay safe

Fr Geoff

## **NOTICES**

**KNITTERS:** The group that Dame Helen Hyde took to Rwanda in February was a great success. Our blankets were really appreciated. I saw some of the photos very briefly at choir just before the virus took hold and Carolyn would be happy to come and talk to us, at some point. I wondered if a Wednesday coffee morning slot would be appropriate after the church re-opens? It would be good if we could continue. Casting on 40 stitches and working blanket length strips would be good and less stitching up to be done. Other items are needed so please let me know if you can help. Many thanks again. Vicki (01923 229408).

**WE ARE ASKED** to put a lighted candle in our window at 7.00pm on Sundays as part of the National Call to Prayer