



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

TRINITY 13

Sunday 6 September 2020

Welcome back to St Michael's. At 9.30am there is a eucharist with congregation in Church, music but no congregational singing. There will be a limit of 40 people, and hygiene, social distancing, and track and trace will be in place, but most importantly, we are here!

The service will also be live-streamed on our YouTube channel "**St Michaels Church Watford**" for those who are unable to attend physically.

After the service, St Michael's will remain open for private prayer until 12.00 noon.

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

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

**The Church:** The Parish of St Francis Luton in our Diocese.  
Those who act as Spiritual Directors, Advisers, and Soul Friends.  
The Anglican Church of Southern Africa, Thabo Makgoba its Archbishop, and all its people.

**The World:** Pupils and staff beginning a new school term.  
Indigenous peoples being evicted from their lands across the world.  
The people of Lebanon and the rebuilding of political leadership, community and infrastructure.

**The Community and Parish:** Our local schools, for a safe, enjoyable and productive new term.

Thanksgiving for Celebration 2020 and all those its reached and encouraged.

All our people on holiday, planning to go, or returning, for refreshment and encouragement.

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

**The Departed:**

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**Collect**

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:  
help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you;  
through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**FIRST READING Exodus 12.1–14**

A reading from the book of Exodus.

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:  
<sup>2</sup> This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.  
<sup>3</sup> Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household.  
<sup>4</sup> If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it.  
<sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.  
<sup>6</sup> You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.  
<sup>7</sup> They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.  
<sup>8</sup> They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.  
<sup>9</sup> Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs.  
<sup>10</sup> You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.  
<sup>11</sup> This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD.  
<sup>12</sup> For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the LORD.  
<sup>13</sup> The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.  
<sup>14</sup> This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

## **SECOND READING Romans 13.8–14**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- <sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.
- <sup>9</sup> The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet’; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’
- <sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.
- <sup>11</sup> Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;
- <sup>12</sup> the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light;
- <sup>13</sup> let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy.
- <sup>14</sup> Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

## **GOSPEL Matthew 18.15–20**

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

Jesus spoke to his disciples.

- <sup>15</sup> ‘If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.
- <sup>16</sup> But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
- <sup>17</sup> If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector.
- <sup>18</sup> Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
- <sup>19</sup> Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
- <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.’

## **Homily**

Jesus' words in this Gospel are so very appropriate for our current situation. I don't mean all the first part, which I don't think Jesus ever said. (Jesus spent his life trying to bring tax collectors and sinners into his fellowship, not exclude them) The last words, though, are authentic and very moving words of Jesus – where two or three people are gathered in his name, he is there. Under lockdown, many people found themselves being Christians in small groups, couples, and sometimes alone. We were not able to access a special place where Jesus is especially present. We were reminded that Jesus is where we are.

Love and prayers  
Fr Geoff

St Michael's Church is now open for private prayer on Wednesdays, 10.00am – 12.00 noon, and Sundays 10.45am – 12.15pm. Hygiene and social distancing procedures are in operation for your protection. All very welcome.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR BRIDGET RUSSELL**, who will be licensed as a Reader today, Sunday 6th September, and will be exercising her reader ministry with us here at St Michael's. I am very pleased and excited by this, and I am sure the loving family of St Michael's will enfold her as she begins lay ministry here. Fr Geoff.

**If you would like to donate** to St Michael's during the pandemic, there is a JustGiving page at:  
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/stmichaelandallangels>

## **BIKE & HIKE 2020**

In view of the peculiar circumstances this year with the possibility of the Open Day 12 September being cancelled if the Government so decides, I propose that I be sponsored as Church representative for the work I am doing anyway in processing this year's appeal.

If you wish to sponsor me, you can see me in church or telephone me on 01923 227276. In either situation, I will take particulars and add them to the sponsorship form to be retained at home for safety reasons.

If anyone comes forward to cycle or hike, I will pass on the appropriate documentation. Thanks. Robert Bilson

Website: <http://www.stmichaels-watford.org.uk>  
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