



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**MICHAELMAS**  
**Sunday 27 September 2020**

Welcome back to St Michael's when we celebrate our Patronal Festival. At 9.30am there is a Parish 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:** Church choirs, organists and musicians.  
The Parish of Bromham in our Diocese.  
The Province of ECUSA of Sudan, Ezekiel Kumir Kondo its Archbishop and all its people.

**The World:** People working in the hospitality and culture industries.  
People facing redundancy when the furlough scheme end.  
People whose wedding plans have had to change.

**The Community and Parish:** Bridget Russell and her ministry with us.  
Staff, residents, and families of care homes in our area.  
Schools with which we are connected personally or as a Church.

**The Ill and the Housebound:** Especially Christopher Bilson, Janet Chandler, Audrey Dixon, Cynthia Dixon, Claire Dunning, Fr Robert Featherstone, Jemima Hill,, 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:** Pam Jennings (Vicki Matthews' sister); Peter Hinchey (Maggie Shrive's father).

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**COLLECT**

Everlasting God, you have ordained and constituted the ministries of angels and mortals in a wonderful order: grant that as your holy angels always serve you in heaven, so, at your command, they may help and defend us on earth; 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 Genesis 28.10–17**

A reading from the book of Genesis.

- <sup>10</sup> Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran.
- <sup>11</sup> He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place.
- <sup>12</sup> And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- <sup>13</sup> And the LORD stood beside him and said, 'I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring;
- <sup>14</sup> and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring.
- <sup>15</sup> Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.'
- <sup>16</sup> Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the LORD is in this place – and I did not know it!'
- <sup>17</sup> And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

## **SECOND READING Revelation 12.7–12**

A reading from the book of Revelation.

- <sup>7</sup> War broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back,
- <sup>8</sup> but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven.
- <sup>9</sup> The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world – he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.
- <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.
- <sup>11</sup> But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.
- <sup>12</sup> Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!’

## **GOSPEL John 1.47–51**

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

- <sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, ‘Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!’
- <sup>48</sup> Nathanael asked him, ‘Where did you come to know me?’ Jesus answered, ‘I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.’
- <sup>49</sup> Nathanael replied, ‘Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!’
- <sup>50</sup> Jesus answered, ‘Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.’
- <sup>51</sup> And he said to him, ‘Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.’

## **HOMILY**

The story of Jacob's ladder is about realising God's presence. Jacob realised that he was in a place where there was communication and interaction between earth and heaven, which he perceived as the angels going up and down. He saw that it was a holy place, though he had never realised it. I think that any place can be holy, a place where earth communicates with heaven, so long as there are people searching for God, and open to his presence. Our role is not to create God's presence, but to perceive it, and not necessarily where we expect it to be.

Love and prayers

Fr Geoff

**TODAY**, Sunday 27th September, at our 9.30am Parish Eucharist, we welcome Bridget Russell, who has been licensed to our Parish as a Reader, and there will be a short liturgy inaugurating her ministry here.

**NEXT WEEK WE CELEBRATE HARVEST**, and Harvest gifts (dried and tinned goods) are welcome at the service (they will not be brought up to the front during the service though), or can be brought on Wednesday morning to Church, or at any time to the Vicarage. They will be quarantined and then taken to the Food Bank.

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.

**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>

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

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