



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY  
BIBLE SUNDAY  
25 October 2020**

Welcome back to St Michael's. 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.

---

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

**The Church:** The Church in Wales, John Davies its Archbishop and all its people.

The Parish of Wymington in our Diocese.

Cathedral ministries in the Province of the West Indies.

**The World:** People living in areas under stricter COVID regulations.

The people of the US in election time.

The people of France following the recent terrorist murder.

**The Community and Parish:** Our Annual Meetings.

All who hold positions of responsibility in our Church.

All who have been bereaved over the last year.

**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:**

---

**Collect**

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**FIRST READING Nehemiah 8.1–4a, 8–12**

A reading from the book of Nehemiah.

- <sup>1</sup> All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel.
- <sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month.
- <sup>3</sup> He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- <sup>4</sup> The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose;
- <sup>8</sup> So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.
- <sup>9</sup> And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.
- <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'
- <sup>11</sup> So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, 'Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.'
- <sup>12</sup> And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

## **SECOND READING Colossians 3.12–17**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

- <sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.
- <sup>13</sup> 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.
- <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
- <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.
- <sup>16</sup> 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.
- <sup>17</sup> 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 Matthew 24.30–35**

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

- <sup>30</sup> 'The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" with power and great glory.
- <sup>31</sup> And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
- <sup>32</sup> From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.
- <sup>33</sup> So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.
- <sup>34</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.
- <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

## HOMILY

The Gospel today speaks of natural phenomena which say something about the activity of God in the world, without exactly telling us how to recognise God acting. We are in that same place with regard to COVID-19. We know that God is present in this crisis, but how and in what way is mysterious and not easy to recognise. We know that for some it is a crisis which is deepening their search for God, and for some it has made them give up on God. For my part, I know I believe in God, and feel God's presence and activity, but I don't know enough to point a finger and say "there is God".

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.

**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>

**REMINDER:** British Summer Time ends today (25 October). Clocks go back one hour at 2 am.

**FOODBANK:** There is an urgent need for donations of toiletries, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet rolls and tissues for our Foodbank clients. If you could help this would be much appreciated.

**THERE IS AN EXHIBITION OF ART WORK** by our own Martin Matthews at the Stable Gallery, Reveley Lodge, Elstree Road, Bushey until mid-November.

Open Mon - Fri 10 - 4pm, Sat 12 - 4pm. Check Reveley Lodge web-site to be sure before travelling. Small car park, or parking in road and Clay Lane.