



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

CHRIST THE KING
22 November 2020

During lockdown, our Services at 9.30am on Sundays, and 10.00am on Thursdays, will still take place, livestreamed on our YouTube channel “St Michaels Church Watford”, but the Church will not be open for a congregation to attend in person.

The Church will be open for private prayer on Sundays from 10.45am – 12.00noon and on Wednesdays from 10.00am – 12.00noon. Food Bank will still be operating on Wednesday mornings. We meet for a Zoom Coffee Morning on Saturdays at 11.00am (contact us for the link), and other Zoom meetings will take place and will be advertised, including weekly Morning Prayer and an Advent Course (see back page).

We may be locked down, but we are still a Church family, called together in prayer, worship and loving fellowship

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

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Parish of St Peter Broadwater (Stevenage) in our Diocese.
The Church of Bermuda, Nicholas Dill its Bishop and all its people.
The work of the worldwide Church in protecting women from violence and exploitation.

The World: The prevention of human trafficking.
All work on developing, testing, and administering a COVID-19 vaccine.
All those suffering mental stress during the pandemic.

The Community and Parish: Our Watford MP.
Churches Together in Central South and West Watford.
Our personal and Church plans for the Advent and Christmas seasons.

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

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King;

keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Ezekiel 34. 11–16, 20–24

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

- ¹¹ Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out.
¹² As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.
¹³ I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land.
¹⁴ I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.
¹⁵ I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD.
¹⁶ I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.
²⁰ Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.
²¹ Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide,
²² I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.
²³ I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd.
²⁴ And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

SECOND READING Ephesians 1. 15–23

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

- ¹⁵ I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason
¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.
¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him,

18 so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to
which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the
saints,
19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to
the working of his great power.
20 God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated
him at his right hand in the heavenly places,
21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is
named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.
22 And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for
the church,
23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

GOSPEL Matthew 25.31–46

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

31 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on
the throne of his glory.

32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from
another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats,
33 and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my
Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;
35 for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to
drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in
prison and you visited me."

37 Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and
gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?

38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you
clothing?

39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?"

40 And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of
these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

41 Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into
the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels;

42 for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to
drink,

43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing,
sick and in prison and you did not visit me."

44 Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a
stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?"

45 Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least
of these, you did not do it to me."

46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

HOMILY

Today's Gospel is about how we see the people around us. Sometimes we are so concerned to decide who we should help, and how, that we fail to see the needy people around us. This is not just about people who help everybody and people who help nobody. Our problem could be that we just help the people we want to help, and don't see the people God wants us to help. 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 noon. Hygiene and social distancing procedures are in operation for your protection. All very welcome.

There will be a series of Advent Reflections and Discussions on four Thursday Evenings beginning on 26th November. They will be using the Advent Course from St Martin in the Fields, which uses paintings to guide reflections on the themes of Advent, and will take place on Zoom. Please let me know if you would like to join, and I will send the link.

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>

WE AT WATFORD AND THREE RIVERS REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP are always so very grateful for the donations SMAA church gives for our clients - from under the "Angel Tree". This year we are packing our Christmas boxes on 4th and 5th December so we are hoping to collect donations during the month of November. My latest count makes it 117 households whom we are supporting: of those 76 are families with children, 27 are single men and 14 are single women. If you are at all able to donate then, to "play safe" I would suggest concentrating on consumables such as toiletries, including children's soaps etc, crayons and felt tips for all sizes, playdo, bubbles, dot-to-dot etc and colouring books, sticker books, sleepwear and painting aprons, reading books for all ages, and avoiding large toys or games/puzzles involving lots of small parts (many of our families have to keep moving home and live in cramped conditions). Truly grateful for whatever you can give. *Sue Ellison*

BIKE & HIKE 2020: For information, I have sent to the Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust a cheque for £240.00, this being the total raised by the congregation of St Michael's. May I repeat my thanks to all who contributed.

In due course, the Trust will donate £120.00 to St Michael's. Thanks again to those who qualify, for their willingness to Gift Aid their contributions.

Hopefully, the 2021 Bike & Hike will be back to normal when churches and chapels will be open, with a better opportunity for cycling and hiking sponsorship.

I hope and pray you all remain safe and well. *Robert Bilson*

OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER AT WEST HERTS COLLEGE on 1st December is unfortunately now cancelled due to lockdown.

Website: <http://www.stmichaels-watford.org.uk>
St Michael and All Angels PCC is a Registered Charity No 1132010