



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**John, Apostle and Evangelist**  
**27 December 2020**

## **CHURCH OPEN FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP**

Welcome back to St Michael's. At 9.30am there is a eucharist with congregation in Church, music but no singing. Tier 4 restrictions indicate no interacting with anyone outside your household whilst in the Church.

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

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

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

**The Church:** Churches over the world celebrating with us.  
Christians celebrating Christmas at home.  
Church Leaders across the world.

**The World:** Peace in the Holy Land.  
A safer, brighter, happier 2021.  
Release from the pandemic.

**The Community and Parish:** A happy and peaceful 2021 for all our Church Family and Community.

All those facing economic hardship due to the effects of the pandemic.  
All those struggling with the inability to meet family and friends.

**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:**

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**Collect**

Merciful Lord, cast your bright beams of light upon the Church: that, being enlightened by the teaching of your blessed apostle and evangelist Saint John, we may so walk in the light of your truth that we may at last attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ your incarnate 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 Exodus 33.7–11a**

A reading from the book of Exodus.

- 7 Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp; he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp.
- 8 Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise and stand, each of them, at the entrance of their tents and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent.
- 9 When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses.
- 10 When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise and bow down, all of them, at the entrance of their tents.
- 11 Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.

**SECOND READING I John 1**

A reading from the first letter of John.

- 1 We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life –
- 2 this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us –
- 3 we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.
- 4 We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

- 5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.
- 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true;
- 7 but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
- 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- 9 If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

## **GOSPEL John 21.19b–25**

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

- 19 After this Jesus said to Peter, ‘Follow me.’
- 20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?’
- 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about him?’
- 22 Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!’
- 23 So the rumour spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’
- 24 This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true.
- 25 But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

## HOMILY

I think we can all agree that 2020 has been a very hard year, and the beginning of 2021 is going to show no let-up. We've got so used to bad news, and restrictions to our way of life that it seems almost unremarkable. As Christians we are now celebrating the coming into the world of Jesus Christ, who is our hope, our light, and our life. What is more, nothing can separate us from the love of God. Sometimes we have to hold on to our faith when it seems nonsensical. How can we believe in a loving God through all we have experienced, and will do? The answer, as always, is faith. Faith is not faith that needs evidence or proof. This, more than ever, is a time for faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love.

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 no Thursday Morning Eucharist this week.

**If you would like to donate** to St Michael's during the pandemic, there is also a JustGiving page at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/stmichaelandallangels>