

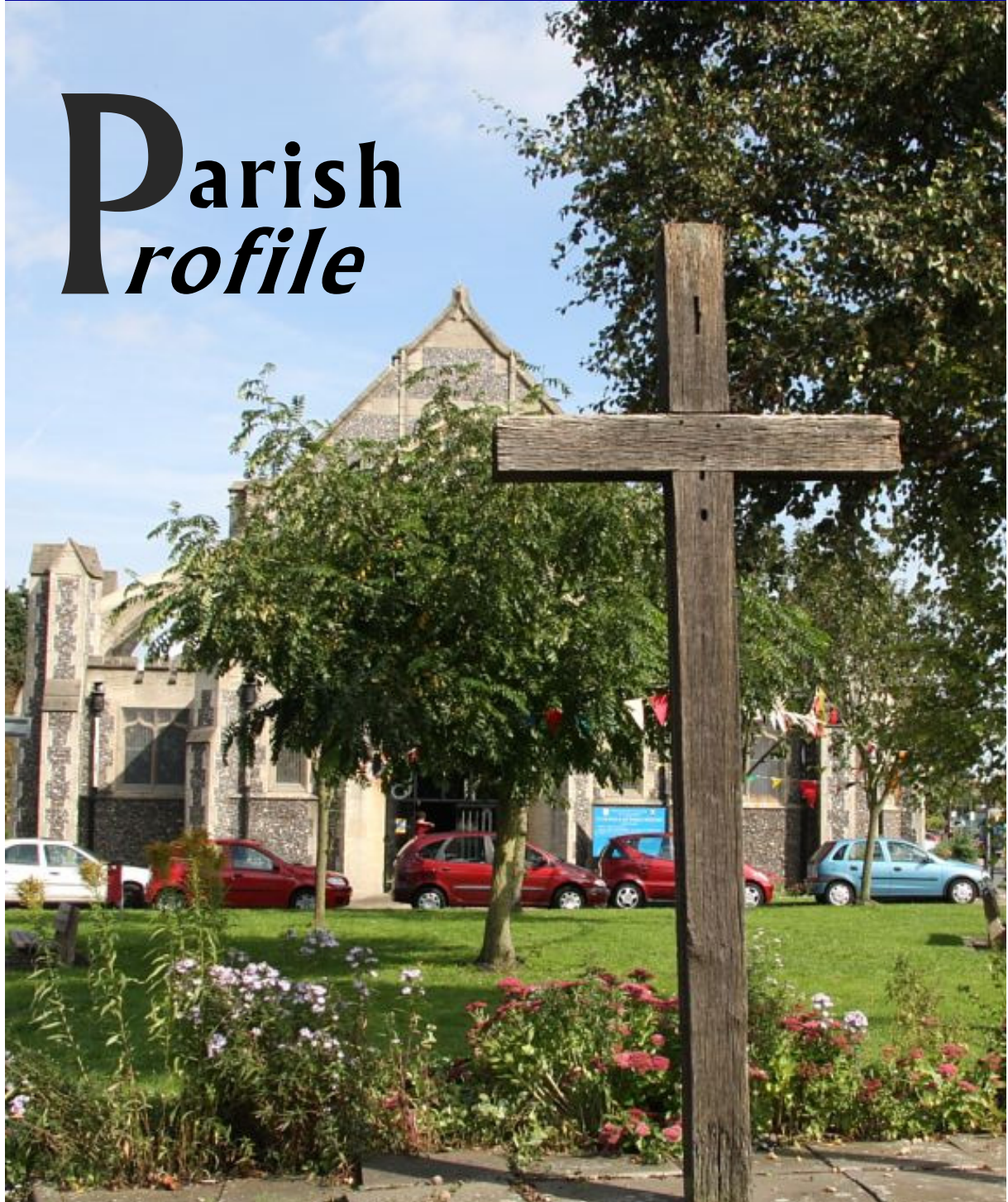


St Michael & All Angels' Church

Watford, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom



Parish *profile*



**ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS,
DURBAN ROAD/MILDRED AVENUE, WATFORD**



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***St Michael's is here to make
God known in this place.***

The Future

We are looking for a dynamic and visionary leader with a genuine feeling for those living in the parish, and with a sensitivity for the ethnic mix in West Watford; someone who is willing to join in interfaith activities and who will be seen as a strong Christian presence in this area.

Strengths

The strengths of St Michael & All Angels:

- ◆ Church members are very positive and involved in many things both spiritual and social.
- ◆ The quality and variety of the music enhances our worship.
- ◆ Having a non-stipendiary part-time priest is a bonus. Already he has made us aware how important it is to work together and plan for the future.





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- ◆ Our beautiful building is a wonderful, peaceful place for worship but we are continually exploring other uses for it such as concerts, drama and social gatherings.
- ◆ The interest and affection in which our church is held by people in West Watford be they Anglican or of another denomination or faith.
- ◆ The enjoyable social functions arranged by the social committee which are always well-supported.
- ◆ Initiatives such as opening the church for coffee midweek, the monthly bring-and-share lunch, the monthly parish walk; all give church members the opportunity to bring friends into church to socialise and meet new people.
- ◆ The opportunities available in the Deanery of Watford to worship together (e.g. Deanery Evensong), to discuss together (e.g. Open Deanery Synod meetings), for youth groups to meet together, get to know one another and perhaps fund-raise for a particular cause (e.g. Christian Aid Quiz Evening). All of these activities are supported by members of St Michael's.



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Weaknesses

The number of church members needs to be increased as also does the frequency of attendance. At present the church membership is generous of its time, and works in many ways for St Michael's, but the average age of the congregation is increasing and there are not very many families and people in the 20/40 age group. Some families with young children tend to move away from West Watford as they find they need more space for living and for a car.

Guidance, experience and fresh ideas from a new Priest in Charge would, we hope, help to tackle this problem.

Location

The parish of St Michael & All Angels is located in West Watford (WD18 7DY). It is situated in a residential area. Near to the church are largely terraced Edwardian houses of different sizes; there are also one- and two-bed flats, bedsitters, house subdivision, and, further into West Watford, a large council estate. The Church building is located in a corner of the parish. The parish which is approximately 13,000 in number has a high ratio of Asian people, mainly Muslim, and a large number of Roman Catholics through the Irish and Italian population. There are also Eastern Europeans and Africans coming to and living in the area.

Watford General Hospital is just outside the parish boundary next to Watford Football Club.

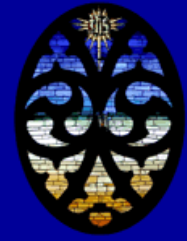
There are four primary and two secondary schools within the parish (none C of E, one RC primary). Most of the schools (including the Roman Catholic one) use the church building at some time during the year. They come for their harvest and Christmas celebrations and on other occasions to see the different artefacts that are used in the church. There are many residential/nursing homes, some adapted from the larger Edwardian housing and others purpose built. Members of St Michael's go to some of these and conduct a simple service on a monthly basis; communion is taken to people in others.

Watford has excellent transport links both to London (mainline and underground) and to most parts of the UK. It has easy access to the M1 and M25. There is a good variety of state and independent schools. The main shopping area is within walking distance of the Vicarage. There is also Watford Palace Theatre; Watford Colosseum holds first-class concerts and other entertainments. The town's history of brewing and printing is well-documented in the Watford Museum and there are several open spaces including Cassiobury Park which leads into Whippendell Woods.



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The church has two halls on site — one is St Michael's Hall (below) which was the original church 100 years ago. It is now leased to the Multi-Cultural Community Centre which is funded by Watford Borough Council. The Church has good relations with the Centre and has two members on the Management Committee. The second church hall (Littlebury Hall, right) is now shared with the Watford YMCA who use it as a



Littlebury Hall

Surestart Children's Centre during weekdays; the Church rents out this hall to other local groups during evenings and at the weekends and also uses the facilities for some of its own activities at these times.



St Michael's Hall

There is one church building in the parish and the tradition of worship is 'liberal catholic'. There are 153 on the Electoral Roll of which 77 are non-resident and 99 are women.

The West Herts Sports & Social Club near the church is a popular meeting place. There are no pubs near the church as the ground was sold for development with a covenant forbidding any pubs to be built.

Worship

SERVICES ON SUNDAY:

TIME	TYPE	FREQUENCY	ATTENDANCE
8 a.m.	Holy Communion (<i>Order One</i> in traditional language) — held once a month during the vacancy	Weekly	8-12
9.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist (modern language) with crèche	Weekly	60-80
11.15 a.m.	Family Service — three times a year this is a simple Eucharist	Monthly	35-45
6.30 p.m.	Evening Prayer	Weekly	3-4
6.30 p.m.	Choral Evensong	Three times a year	25-30



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WEEKDAY SERVICES:

Morning Office	<i>Common Worship</i>	Monday - Friday	1-3
Toddlers' Group	Bible story, singing, prayers and play	Weekly (Monday a.m.)	15-20
Holy Communion	<i>Order One</i> in traditional language	Weekly (Thursday a.m.)	8-12
Saints & Festivals	Eucharists	As appropriate	

OCCASIONAL SERVICES:

Christingle, Crib Service, Memorial, Harvest Thanksgiving and Mothering Sunday. (These services frequently have a service book specially designed for the occasion.)

MUSIC:

The Church is affiliated to the *Royal School of Church Music* and has a strong music tradition with a superb organist, three-manual pipe organ and a robed choir of 16 men and women and several others who join it for special occasions. Children in the choir are prepared for the *RSCM* examinations. The choir takes part in Diocesan, Deanery and *RSCM* services and is invited to take part on other musical occasions. The choir has links with choirs in Germany and Denmark. A group of



The music group playing at an 11.15 service

instrumentalists, both youth and adult, drawn from the congregation, accompanies the 11.15 and other services.



St Michael's choir



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Liturgical Tradition

The Church has a good collection of vestments which are used at Eucharistic services and on other appropriate occasions. Alb-and-stole and surplice-and-stole are also used. Incense is used at most 9.30 Sung Eucharists. The sacrament is reserved. A stand for votive candles is in the Lady Chapel.

Occasional Offices

Baptisms: approximately thirty a year.

Marriages (and Marriage Blessings): approximately eight a year.

Funerals: approximately fifty a year at the crematorium and one/two in church.

The last **Confirmation** (five young people) was two years ago.

Staffing

Vicar (Vacant).

Curate (Vacant). In the past the parish has been a training parish; the last curate left in October 2006 and no appointment has been made since.



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Non-Stipendiary Assistant Priest (15 hours a week shared with Hospital Chaplaincy work).

Two **Readers** and a loyal and experienced team of **Servers**.

There is **lay participation** in all services: reading, leading intercessions and serving. The 11.15 service, evening prayer and the services at residential homes are frequently taken entirely by lay people.

There is informal parochial visiting of our elderly members. One of our church members is a volunteer chaplaincy visitor and an Anglican Eucharistic steward in residential homes and the hospital.

There is no paid staff. All administration is carried out by volunteers.

Pastoral and Ecumenical

St Michael's is part of a Local Ecumenical Project with West Watford Free Church (Baptist). There is a tradition of a monthly united evening service between these two churches and Trinity Methodist Church and an occasional exchange of pulpits for the morning services. These arrangements are at present under review.

There are *Churches Together in Watford* and *Christians across Watford* organisations and a Town Centre Chaplaincy. St Michael's is committed to the mission of God, locally and internationally. We support a number of agencies and encourage involvement by our members.

Organisations/Activities

The Mothers' Union Branch and the Intercessory Prayer Group (daytime); Bible-study Group and *Pause* spirituality group (evening); bring-and-share lunch (monthly), parish walk (monthly); open morning (Wednesday).

For young people — Toddlers' Group; Sunday School; Brownies; Youth Group; Kids' Club; Holiday Club (one week during the school summer holidays for primary school children), workshops on the Saturday before Advent, Easter and Harvest doing appropriate craft work and ending with a short act of worship.





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St Michael's Church Building

This was built just before the First World War, more work was done after the war but the building was never completed as intended by the architect (Alexander Bond) — see drawings available in vestry.

St Michael's has been fortunate with donations in recent years which have enabled a significant amount of renovation and modernisation including: both vestries, a small kitchen, the West End glass doors and an office (computer with broadband, telephone, photocopier and printer). The church has a voice enhancement system and a hearing loop, also access and toilet for the disabled.





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The main recommendations from the last Quinquennial report concerned dampness caused by blocked down pipes and gutters which is a continuing problem that we try to address regularly. Our surveyor also suggests that we embark upon a programme of renovating the stonework round the church and this we are in the process of starting.

The west end of the church can be easily adapted as a meeting area; the choir vestry is also used for church activities e.g. meetings, social gatherings for up to 30 people, crèche on Sunday mornings.

All the chairs in the church are moveable and, if taken to the side aisles, create a large space which is used for worship, a Christmas Fair, quiz nights, ceilidhs, etc. Parish lunches are also held in the church.



Finance

The income for 2007 was £115,000 which included a legacy, grant for the organ and £30,000 received from rental income for two halls, the curate's house and the church. The present planned giving and tax recovered through Gift Aid are barely enough to cover our parish share which amounts to £40,000 and fund-raising is part of our church life. This we try to approach with a positive attitude and regard it as an opportunity for outreach. All church members are encouraged to give using the envelope scheme or by standing order and where possible to Gift Aid their donations. In 2007 £2,671 was given from general giving for mission and charity. In addition each year there are separate initiatives to raise money for such



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organisations as Christian Aid, The Children's Society, The Leprosy Mission, the New Hope Trust (a local charity for the homeless), the local hospice and this year we have also collected for the Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal. Each year we take part in the Herts & Beds Historic Churches Sponsored Cycle/Hike.

Expenses of Office

The expenses of office are reimbursed in full using as a guideline *The Parochial Expenses of the Clergy*. There is no secretarial provision but the equipment in the church office is freely available for personal use.

Communications

There is a monthly magazine called *Sword* which has a section produced by our LEP partner West Watford Free Church (Baptist).

Two weekly publications are given out on a Sunday. *The Messenger* includes suggestions for intercessions, the day's readings and notices for the week. The second weekly publication is produced by the organist and choirmaster and gives detailed notes of the music that is being used during that Sunday.





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St Michael's has a website (www.stmichaels-watford.org.uk) which contains a diary of forthcoming services and events, details of its location together with a brief history, copies of the parish magazine and email links for general and specific enquiries.

Leadership within St Michael's

The PCC has 12 elected members, two co-opted members, four advisers for such things as finance and child protection, in addition to the six ex-officio members. The age range of members is approximately from 35 to 70+. The PCC works through a system of committees (each with five or six members) who report to the PCC on a regular basis.

Churchwardens have an overview of the different PCC committees. They are involved in the spiritual side as well as the practical side of church life. During the vacancy they will watch the division of responsibilities of both the pastoral team and the laity to make sure no one is taking on too much. They will also arrange for the services to be covered.

Vicarage



Situated about 100 yards from the church, this is a four-bedroomed house built in 1964, three of the bedrooms having large built-in cupboards. Downstairs there is a study, dining room, lounge, a family-sized kitchen and a garage. Double-glazed replacement windows were fitted three years ago. There is a large garden with mature trees. During the vacancy the house has been re-wired.



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