



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

ADVENT 3

16 December 2007

A warm welcome to our services today.

At the 9.30 am Eucharist, Fr John celebrates, Violet Allen-Smith preaches and Pat Brown leads the intercessions. A crèche is available.

Hymns: 34, 607, 38 and 37

Setting: Missa Seraphica

Pat and Fr John warmly invite everyone to the Vicarage today after the 9.30 service for coffee, tea etc.

Evensong in the Lady Chapel is at 6.30 pm.

There is a private Carol Party in Church at 8.00 pm.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Diocese of Worcester: Bishop Peter Selby as he retires.
The Church in Ware: The Parish of Christ Church Ware, David Proud (Vicar).

The World: Peace in Iraq and Afghanistan.
The people of Russia at a time of political change.
Those who are tempted to acts of greed, deception and mis-use of their power and position.

The Community and Parish: Watford Boys' Grammar School, its Headmaster, staff, governors and pupils.
Our Choir, and Andy Benoy, as they prepare the music for Christmas.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Ray Angles, Monica Batt, Ellen Benoy, Günter Bouché, John Burn, Marjorie Carlisle, Jennifer Coley, Bill Craddock-Jones, Jean Crouch, Ifagaani Desiderio, June Dickinson, Kate Dickinson, Jocelyn Harewood, Jenny Houghton, Mary Kearns, Lesley Kinch, Loretta Lynch, Maggie Maguire, Stella Meager, Eva Portas, Myrtle Powell, Ann Reed, Gladys Robertson, Maureen Swann, June Tatnall, Bill Widdowson, Anne Wightman, Maureen Williams and Sue Winterbotham.

The Departed: Arthur Edwards (aged 75), Brightwell Road
Sandra Sandell (aged 63), Combe Road.

Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 35.1–10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

- 1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
- 2 and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.
- 3 Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.
- 4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'
- 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
- 6 then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;
- 7 the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
- 8 A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
- 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.
- 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

SECOND READING James 5.7–10

A reading from the letter of James.

- 7 Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.
- 8 You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.
- 9 Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!
- 10 As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

GOSPEL Matthew 11.2–11

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

- 2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples
- 3 and said to Jesus, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’
- 4 Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’
- 7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.
- 10 This is the one about whom it is written, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.”
- 11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.’

THIS WEEK

Mon	17	Dec	Toddlers' Group	10.00 – 11.30am
Tue	18	Dec	Watford Boys Grammar School Carols (Church in use all day for rehearsals)	7.30pm
Wed	19	Dec	Coffee in Church	10.30-12 noon
Thu	20	Dec	Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language)	10.00am
			Kids' Club	3.30 – 5.00pm
			Choir Practice	7.00 - 8.30pm
Fri	21	Dec	<i>End of Term</i>	
Sat	22	Dec	Rehearsal for Nativity presentation	10.00am – 12 noon
Sun	23	Dec	<u>FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT</u>	
			Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language)	8.00am
			SUNG EUCHARIST (Crèche available)	9.30am
			Rehearsal for Nativity presentation	11.15 – 1.15pm
			Service of Lessons and Carols	6.00pm

NOTICES

CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION: This will be part of the Crib Service which is at 4 pm on Christmas Eve and there will be rehearsals on the morning of the 22nd and after the 9.30 service on the 23rd December. If you know of any young people who would like to take part please contact Jane Talbot (01923 226276).

BRING-&-SHARE LUNCHESES: Please note that the next one will be on Ash Wednesday, 6 February (NO Lunch in January).

CHRISTMAS CARDS (see tables in north aisle):

Distribution round the parish: Please commit yourself, as we always do, to deliver these by signing your name against a particular road or section thereof on the list and taking the appropriate number of cards.

Personal Greetings Cards: The tables for our internal mail are available now

The 'large' card: As last year, there is a card which may be signed by anyone who wishes to send their Christmas greetings to all church members and make a donation to a worthy cause. This year the money donated will go to Bliss – the premature baby charity – further information about Bliss is given on the table with the 'large' card..

FLOWER FUND: Any contributions towards the Christmas flowers will be gratefully received. If you are able to gift aid your contribution, please use a white gift aid envelope.

FINAL COPY DATE FOR THE Christmas/January SWORD is **today** Sunday, 16 December - **MIDDAY** at the **LATEST**. Hard copy, floppy disc or email to DENNIS.H.BEACH@sky.com.