



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT

14 December 2008

A warm welcome to our services today.

At the 9.30 am Eucharist, Fr George celebrates, Violet Allen-Smith preaches and Anne Eccleshall leads the intercessions. A crèche is available. Sunday School is in Littlebury Hall.

**Hymns: 34, 26, 444 and 28**

**Setting: White**

Coffee and tea will be served in church after the 9.30 service.

This is followed at 11.15 by our annual Christingle Service – please stay on.

The monthly service at River Court is at 3.00 pm.

Service for The Compassionate Friends is at 6.30pm.

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

**The Church:** Thomas Irigei, Bishop of Kumi, Uganda.  
Anglican Methodist Covenant Relations in the Diocese.  
The work of The Children's Society.

**The World:** Peace in all troubled places.  
All Members of Parliament.

**The Community and Parish:** Those who will come to The Compassionate Friends Service this evening, to remember their children who died.  
The pupils and staff of Watford Boys Grammar School as they come for their Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on Tuesday.  
Our Choir, and Andy Benoy, as they prepare the music for Christmas.

**The Ill and the Housebound:** Especially Ray Angles, Ellen Benoy, Mel Browne, John Burn, Marjorie Carlisle, Jennifer Coley, Bill Craddock-Jones, Jean Crouch, June Dickinson, Kate Dickinson, Simon Fowle, Jocelyn Harewood, Gladys Holloway, Jenny Houghton, Lionel Jones, Mary Kearns, Lesley Kinch, Loretta Lynch, Maggie Maguire, Stella Meager, Dorcas Ochola, Gaynor Osbourne, Myrtle Powell, Bryony Purse, Ann Reed, Gladys Robertson, Elaine Robinson, Maureen Swann, June Tatnall, Anne Wightman, and Maureen Williams.

**The Departed:**

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**Collect**

○ 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 61.1–4, 8–11**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The servant of the LORD said:

- <sup>1</sup> The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
- <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;
- <sup>3</sup> to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
- <sup>4</sup> They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.
- <sup>8</sup> For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
- <sup>9</sup> Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
- <sup>10</sup> I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- <sup>11</sup> For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

## SECOND READING I Thessalonians 5.16–24

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

My brothers and sisters,  
16 Rejoice always,  
17 pray without ceasing,  
18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.  
19 Do not quench the Spirit.  
20 Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything;  
21 hold fast to what is good;  
22 abstain from every form of evil.  
23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul  
and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

## GOSPEL John 1.6–8, 19–28

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

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.  
7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.  
8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.  
19 This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from  
Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'  
20 He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.'  
21 And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the  
prophet?' He answered, 'No.'  
22 Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent  
us. What do you say about yourself?'  
23 He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way  
of the Lord,"' as the prophet Isaiah said.  
24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.  
25 They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor  
Elijah, nor the prophet?'  
26 John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do  
not know,  
27 the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'  
28 This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

## THIS WEEK

Mon	15	Dec	Toddlers' Group (Choir Vestry)	10.00 – 11.30am
Tue	16	Dec	Watford Boys Grammar School Nine Lessons and Carols (Church in use all day for rehearsals)	7.30pm
Wed	17	Dec	Coffee in Church	10.30am - 12 noon
Thu	18	Dec	Holy Communion	10.00am
			Choir Practice	7.00 - 8.30pm
Sun	21	Dec	<b><u>FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT</u></b> <b><u>SUNG EUCHARIST</u></b>	9.30am
			(crèche available). Sunday School in Littlebury Hall	
			Rehearsal for the Choir starting at	3.30pm
			CAROL SERVICE	6.00pm

## **NOTICES**

**CHRISTINGLE SERVICE:** The Christingle Service this year will be at 11.15 am this morning Sunday, 14 December. All proceeds are in aid of The Children's Society and envelopes and 'candles' for your donations are available in church.

**LAST SUNDAY'S BRING-&-BUY SALE** in aid of the Christingle Service raised a total of £63. This will buy the materials to make the Christingles and any cash left over will be given to the Children's Society. Many thanks to everyone who contributed.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS:** Church Christmas Cards are on sale after the 9.30 service at 10 cards for £4.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS** (see tables in north aisle):

***Distribution round the parish:*** The cards are available for you to take and if any are remaining they should be delivered as soon as possible.

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

***The 'large' card*** is also available; this is for anyone to sign, sending Christmas greetings to members of St Michael's and making a donation. This year the collection will be for Save the Children to be directed to the Congo.

**MINCE PIES:** Next Sunday (21 December) after the Carol Service we shall be serving warm mince pies with tea and coffee. If you are able to donate any mince pies, please bring them to church, preferably in the morning.

**FREE WILL OFFERING** envelopes for 2009 are available for you to collect. If you would like to have a set of envelopes please see Valerie Alvarez.

**CELEBRATIONS OVER CHRISTMAS:** Please note that Fr George has kindly agreed to preside over three celebrations – Midnight Eucharist, starting at 11.30 pm; 8 am and 9.30 am on Christmas morning.

**FINAL COPY DATE FOR THE CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR SWORD** is MIDDAY today Sunday, 14 December. Hard copy, floppy disc or email to [DENNIS.H.BEACH@sky.com](mailto:DENNIS.H.BEACH@sky.com).