



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT

21 December 2008

A warm welcome to our services today.

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

Hymns: 610, 243, 238 and 362

Setting: White

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

Our Service of Lessons and Carols is at 6.00 pm this evening and will be followed by mince pies and coffee.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: Ephraim Ademowo, Bishop of Lagos, Nigeria.
All bishops and clergy under threat from hostile atheistic governments or rulers.

Church Schools in the Deanery of Hertford and Ware.

The World: Peace in all troubled places.
Pray for justice, peace and security for Palestine and Israel - and especially for Bethlehem.

All people who are losing their jobs because of the current financial situation.

The Community and Parish: All those who will attend our Christmas Services – that they may be inspired by the Christmas message throughout the year.

All overseas Christians in our Parish who will miss the company of their families back in their own countries.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Ray Angles, Ellen Benoy, Gunter Bouché, 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, Lesley Watkin, Anne Wightman, and Maureen Williams.

The Departed:

Collect

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING 2 Samuel 7.1–11, 16

A reading from the second book of Samuel.

- ¹ Now when David, the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him,
² the king said to the prophet Nathan, ‘See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.’
³ Nathan said to the king, ‘Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.’
⁴ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan:
⁵ Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in?
⁶ I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.
⁷ Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’
⁸ Now therefore you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel;
⁹ and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.
¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly,
¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you, David, that the Lord will make you a house.
¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

SECOND READING Romans 16.25–27

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- ²⁵ To God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages
- ²⁶ but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith –
- ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

GOSPEL Luke 1.26–38

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

- ²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,
- ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.
- ²⁸ And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.'
- ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.
- ³⁰ The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.
- ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.
- ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.
- ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'
- ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'
- ³⁵ The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.
- ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.
- ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.'
- ³⁸ Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her



THIS WEEK

Mon	22	Dec	Toddlers' Group (Choir Vestry)	10.00 – 11.30am
			Rehearsal for Crib Service	10.30am – 12.00noon
Tue	23	Dec	Music Group rehearsal	2.00 – 4.00pm
Wed	24	Dec	CHRISTMAS EVE	
			<i>Please note no coffee in church this morning</i>	
			Crib Service with Nativity play and presentation of gifts	4.00pm
			MIDNIGHT EUCHARIST	11.30pm
Thu	25	Dec	CHRISTMAS DAY	
			Holy Communion	8.00am
			SUNG EUCHARIST	9.30am
Sun	28	Dec	<u>HOLY INNOCENTS</u>	
			SUNG EUCHARIST	9.30 am
			(crèche available). Sunday School in Littlebury Hall	

NOTICES

SINCERE THANKS to all who have done so much to prepare for Christmas – the decorations, the Christmas tree, the almost 100% coverage of the parish with the Christmas leaflets. Your help is greatly appreciated. (Paul & Sylvia Churchwardens)

CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION: This will be part of the Crib Service which is at 4 pm on Christmas Eve and there will be rehearsals tomorrow 22nd December. There are still a few gift tags on the tree at the back of the church – please take one if you would like to bring a present to the Crib Service.

MINCE PIES: Tonight (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.

CHRISTMAS CARDS (see tables in north aisle):

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

The 'large' card is also available; this year the collection will be for Save the Children to be directed to the Congo.

FLOWER FUND: 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.

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.

BRING-&-SHARE LUNCHESES: The next Lunch is on 7 January. Please sign list.

SWORD: The Christmas/New Year edition is available to take and distribute. SWORD SUBSCRIPTIONS for 2009 are now due. Valerie Alvarez has kindly agreed to collect subscriptions for the coming year. Regretfully, due to increased costs and loss of some advertising revenue, the PCC has agreed that the cost of Sword should be increased to 60p per month. If you pay for the year in advance an annual subscription for 12 issues will be £6.00. If you don't subscribe at present and would like to take out a new annual subscription, please see Dennis Beach.