



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**ADVENT 3**

11 December 2011

A warm welcome to our services today.

At the 9.30 am Sung Eucharist, Fr Geoff celebrates, Martin Heath preaches and Sylvia Moring leads the intercessions.

**Hymns: 28, 27, 38 and 26**

**Setting: Oldroyd**

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.

Youth Group Lunch at 12.30pm.

Piano Recital by David Degen and his pupils at 3.00 pm.

Service for the Compassionate Friends at 6.00 pm.

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

**The Church:** Granville Taylor, Bishop of Western North Carolina, USA.  
USPG projects supporting theological education.  
Church Army work with marginalised members of society.

**The World:** The work of the Children's Society.  
The Fair Trade Movement.  
Homeless people, ex-offenders, and people with substance abuse problems.

**The Community and Parish:** Residents and staff at Home Manor.  
Laurance Haines School and Watford Grammar School for Boys.  
All who will receive our Christmas Card.

**The Ill and the Housebound:** Especially Bruce Alexander, Billie Bainbridge (age 4), Christopher Bilson, Peter Coley, Bill and Marion Craddock-Jones, Jean Crouch, Darrell Dunning, David and Janet Freeman, Ben Heath, Jessie Hobby, Leena Hosie, Jenny Houghton, Harvey Jaquest, Mary Kearns, Dorothy Kiddle, Lesley Kinch, Loretta Lynch, Maggie Maguire, Stella Nicholas, Faith Nkugwa, Dorcas Ochola, Gaynor Osbourne, Helen Perry, Myrtle Powell, David Simon, Eric and Anne Wightman

**The Departed:**

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**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 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	12	Dec	Toddlers' Group	10 – 11.30am
Tue	13	Dec	Watford Boys Grammar School Nine Lessons and Carols (Rehearsal all day in church)	7.30pm
Wed	14	Dec	Service at Home Manor	3.00pm
Thur	15	Dec	NO Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language) Laurance Haines School Carol Service	9.30 – 11.00am
			Choir Practice	7.00 – 8.30pm
Sun	18	Dec	<b><u>ADVENT 4</u></b> Holy Communion (Pres: Fr George) <b>SUNG EUCHARIST</b> (President and preacher: Fr George) <b>CAROL SERVICE</b> followed by mince pies and mulled wine	<b>9.30am</b> <b>6.00pm</b>

## NOTICES

FINAL COPY DATE FOR CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR SWORD: Midday on Sunday 18th December 2011. Please submit copy before this date if possible - hard copy, floppy disc or e-mail to:- [dhbeach@sky.com](mailto:dhbeach@sky.com) This is the latest Dennis wants to receive copy as he must get SWORD to the printers on Monday 19th December to ensure SWORD is ready before Christmas.

A PIANO RECITAL by David Degen and his pupils will be given in church this afternoon at 3pm. It will be Christmas themed and all are welcome. The concert is free and there will be a retiring collection with proceeds to St Michael's. Help is needed for refreshments (tea, coffee and biscuits) – please see Father Geoff.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: If you would like to donate something towards the Christmas flowers, perhaps in memory of a loved one, please give your donation to Fay Storey or Jean Alexander. If you are able to gift aid your donation please use one of the gift aid envelopes and mark it Flower Fund. Thank you.

CAROL SERVICE Our Carol Service is at 6 pm on Sunday, 18 December. This will be followed by refreshments and if you are able to donate any mince pies for this occasion please bring them along next Sunday either morning or evening. Thank you.

LIVE CHRISTMAS SCENE with animals: -Help needed by Beechen Grove Baptist for next weekend. More information from [www.watfordschoolstrust.org](http://www.watfordschoolstrust.org)

CHRISTMAS LEAFLETS: These are now available and, together with our friends at Trinity Methodist and West Watford Free, we hope to have as many as possible delivered in the area. There is a list of roads we would like to cover on the Christmas card table. Please sign it today if you are able to deliver some. PERSONAL CHRISTMAS CARD delivery – the tables are available for your cards.

ECUMENICAL CAROL SINGING: On Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December, we will be carol singing around the Holywell area with our friends from Trinity Methodist Church and West Watford Free Church – meet 6.30pm at West Watford Free Church.