



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 25 February 2024

We are now able to receive the wine at communion. There will be a chalice on your left for those who wish to receive by drinking, and on your right for those who wish to receive by dipping their wafer in the wine. You are also welcome to just receive the bread.

Welcome to our service today.

Hymns for Sunday are: 586 The God of Abraham praise (vv.1,3,4,5,10), 627 Ye servants of God (t.227), 386 Be thou my vision, 555 Praise, my soul, the King of heaven.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Parish of St John and St Leonard, Bedford
The Anglican Church of Tanzania
Anna Chaplains, giving spiritual care in care homes.

The World: The people of Ukraine
People in Rafah, Gaza
International cooperation for peace and humanitarian aid.

The Community and Parish: People attending Lent Groups and/or using the “Watch and Pray” material
Residents, staff and families at Care Homes in our area
Our local police and police community support officers.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Jean Alexander, Violet Allen-Smith, Julie Alvarez, Janet Chandler, Jemima Hill, Owen Hutchinson, Lisa Mills, Brian O’Riordan, Valerie O’Riordan, Josephine Stadden, Catherine Stone, Fay Storey, Adelaide Tonkin, and all who care for them.

The Departed:

Collect

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness:
grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;
through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Genesis 17.1–7, 15–16

A reading from the book of Genesis.

- ¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless.
² And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.'
³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him,
⁴ 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations.
⁵ No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations.
⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.
⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.'
¹⁵ God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.
¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

SECOND READING Romans 4.13–25

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- ¹³ The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith.
¹⁴ If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.
¹⁵ For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.
¹⁶ For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us,

¹⁷ as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations') – Abraham believed in the presence of the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

¹⁸ Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations,' according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.'

¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.

²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,

²¹ being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

²² Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.'

²³ Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him,' were written not for his sake alone,

²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

²⁵ who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

GOSPEL Mark 8.31–38

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

³¹ Jesus began to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.

³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?

³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life?

³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

Our service today is available to attend in person
or via livestream on our YouTube channel
“St Michael’s Church Watford”
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8GTX0MfiICGmcDUkXTGFSw>

The 10.00am Eucharist each Thursday is available to attend in person, and livestreamed.

The Church will be open for tea and coffee on Wednesday mornings from 10.00am – 12.00 noon.

The Church of England’s Lent theme this year is “Watch and Pray”. There are resources for daily prayer and reflection, which can be received by email, through a mobile phone app, or by using a book. There is a poster at the back, and a sample of the booklet. If you would like one of the booklets, please let me know, or if you would like help accessing the online material. There will be Lent groups on Tuesday afternoons at 2.30 in Church, and there is a sign up list at the back.

Lent Lunch and Bring and Buy Sale Saturday 16th March 11.30am – 2.00pm

Bag a bargain at Norma’s stall and then enjoy a delicious lunch of homemade soup with bread and cheese ably served by our Brownie friends. Lunch is priced at £5 per adult and £2 per child to include soup, bread, cheese, tea or coffee for adults and squash for children. Lunch served between 12 and 1.30pm.

Anyone able to offer assistance with soup making, setting up, food preparation, serving, washing up and tidying away please speak to Valerie Blacklock or contact on 07858763594.

All profits to Mission Giving Fund.

Norma will be having a Bring-and-Buy Sale after the 9.30 service today Sunday, 25th February. Please come and support.

There will be a very large funeral at St Michaels on this coming Thursday at 12.00 noon. There are likely to be many vehicles and the area will probably be congested for about an hour.